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MODERN HOUSECRAFT

THE ART OF REASONABLE LIVING

BY

LUCY H. YATES,

AUTHOR OF "THE MODEL KITCHEN," ETC.

LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN
1906

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INTRODUCTORY

To the question, "Is it possible to maintain a comfortable home and enjoy the pleasures that make life something better than a mere struggle for the necessaries of existence on an income of from £150 to £300 a year?" the answer that has been given is this, "*It all depends upon the wife.*" Obviously enough it does, because it is on the way in which money is laid out that results depend, and the man who is occupied all day earning is at the mercy of the woman who spends his earnings. He may praise or blame, and he may chafe against mistakes and faults, but he is powerless to do much to alter or amend them.

It follows, therefore, that it is to women we must offer such experiences and suggestions as we have, if these are to be of benefit to the home as a whole.

To enjoy life in a reasonable and rational way, having health both of body and mind, with ability to take a share in all the good that belongs to us nationally, and that comes to us through progress, to live, that is, according to the highest standard of comfort that our means will admit of, is surely the end we have in view when "earning a living." Many will attain this end on a limited amount, while others spend more, yet never find life anything but a weary struggle. What makes the difference?

Of course everything depends upon management or administration; and when we speak of management, we mean that connected with the house. If some housewives are better administrators than others it will be chiefly due to the fact that they have given their minds to the study of the subject, and have put interest as well as intelligence into their work. It will *not* be due to the probability that some are born with an instinct for housekeeping and others not. One may have a greater amount of natural taste and inclination for the work than another, but housekeeping is a study to be learnt, an accomplishment to be acquired. Those who are not willing to learn and not willing to give time and strength to the study should not enter upon the position of house-mistress. It is never a question of whether this work is more or less honourable than any other, of whether it has dignity or not. It is always a question of whether it is or is not the work that claims doing at the time. If it be this, then it is the work that is best worth doing. It is the special piece of world-service required of the one who has it to do. However small may be the amount of natural inclination for the task, with a determination to succeed, success is bound to come eventually.

Where we make a mistake is in failing to see that housekeeping, or housecraft—as we prefer to call it—should, like every other undertaking, progress with the times. The wise householder was one who brought forth out of his treasury "things new and old"—not different things, but the same things in principle, adapted to suit new needs and new times. Good principles never alter, but methods need to be constantly changing. It is the dull mind which goes on doing things precisely as they have always been done, that has no initiative or invention of its own, which hinders progress.

We have called this book "Modern Housecraft," because we hope to show that principles remain the same—especially that principle which is concerned with the estimate of woman's work as of immeasurable importance to the nation—but that under modern conditions of housing, with new appliances and greater facilities, the woman's sphere has widened, and her life has become not only fuller of possibilities, but actually pleasanter and easier to live. That her work as house administrator is a great work will surely be evident to the most superficial reader, we hope, ere we come to the end. And just here I beg leave to quote some words which appeared in the columns of a leading daily paper (the *Tribune*) not long ago. They were written by one who was making comparisons between English and French women in answer to the common contention that the latter are naturally better women of business than are the former.

"All women are in business if employed in any work that is vitally important to health and happiness, to virtue and right thinking . . . not to speak of creature comforts. The life-business of the woman of ordinary circumstances lies in her home; here there is work enough and to spare for her to do, and if she does not do it no one else can fitly fulfil her neglected task. It is undeniable that there are always persons of more or less ability to be found to fill posts in offices and warehouses, but most women have a place in home-life which cannot be filled adequately by any other human being. I can imagine no more important woman of business than she who successfully manages a home, even a very humble one. The work is arduous and incessant, but, more than that, it is absolutely essential, and cannot be shirked."

We have in this book treated the business of housecraft as if the wife were responsible for every item—for rent as well as for provision. She may not pay either rent or taxes, still these are a part of housekeeping; and in many cases, especially in the working classes, this is actually a part of her duty, while many a professional man is compelled to delegate the whole management of his household to his wife. She has need, therefore, to be capable of everything, and it is in order to help her to become capable that our chapters have been written.

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MODERN HOUSECRAFT

I

THE DWELLING: HOW AND WHERE TO FIND IT

After going through a number of lists supplied by heads of families in various localities, it has become evident that the items of *rent* and *food* absorb by far the larger portion of the income in every case, especially where with rent is included rates and taxes and fares to business. In fact, if the income is small, these two items preponderate to such an extent that other expenses rank rather as incidentals than as necessaries! But is this proportion just, and, moreover, is it absolutely necessary? It is true that rents are everywhere higher than they were a few years ago, and rates are constantly rising; but it is hardly possible to do justice to all the other claims of living when rent absorbs one-fourth of the income, as so often it appears to do. We take the liberty of quoting a letter upon this subject, written by one who has evidently thought seriously about it, and who has by practical experience come to the conclusion that the modest house and the simple life are the only things for him.

"It is the man with an income approaching £200, or just exceeding that amount per year, who is most of all anxious to know how to live cheaply. To him, a pound one way or another means so much. Two things must first be considered—where to live, and what to pay for the accommodation. The average business man needs to have at least two means of communication between his home and office, and none but Civil Servants with easy hours can afford to live far away.

"Forty or fifty years ago it was thought a prudent rule not to allow rent, rates, and taxes to exceed a fifth of one's income. Thus, housing accommodation for a man earning £200 per annum would not cost more than £40. That was a time when nearly every man walked to his office. To-day we must add from £5 to £10 for the cost of travelling. Taking the old standard, we should expect a man earning £200 per year to live in a house rented at £32, which, with an average rate of 7s. 6d. and an assessment of £26, would cost him in rates £9 15s.

Can a man with this income find a house in a healthy, open neighbourhood suitable to his tastes unless he pays at least £7 or £8 for a season ticket? It cannot be done.

"Housing accommodation, therefore, costs him £49 or £50 a year beside water rate and inhabited house duty. He has raised his proportion, then, from one-fifth to one-fourth. That, for a start, is too high a price to pay.

"People will never be able to live as cheaply as they should until small houses with few but large living-rooms are built. We want a new type of house, with that horrible social sham, the drawing-room, abolished, and in its place a commodious living-room, of the same size as the two present miserable parlours, and kitchen and scullery of comfortable size. Abolish the drawing-room in the suburban villa, and the servant-girl problem disappears, and several shillings on her food and wages are saved every week.

"Where rates are highest rents are sometimes low, and in judging the cost of accommodation regard must be had, not to the rate per pound, but to the assessment. In a district which is one of the heaviest rated in London, I was offered a house at £45 which ten years before was let at £60. But it was assessed at

£52. It is possible to find two eight-roomed houses, one inside the county of London, and the other outside, where the rate in the pound will be exactly the same, but the assessment of the one will bring the rates to £13 10s., and of the other to £9 15s. Apart from the question of health and of time saved in travelling, one does not live cheaper in rental matters outside the London area unless one can save at least the cost of the season ticket on rent and rates for the same accommodation."

In choosing a house we begin by selecting, first, the locality that is best suited to our means, judged by rates and fares. Then it becomes a question of a small house, a flat, part of a large house or tenement dwelling. The flat and its modern fittings has its attractions, especially for the young couple just setting up, and the modern tenement flats are very nearly as good; the rent becomes an inclusive one, rates and taxes being discharged in the one payment. For many people this style of dwelling is excellently well suited, but where there are children a flat is not a suitable dwelling, and some sacrifice should be made in order to secure the privacy of a house, and sufficient open-air space to give them a playground.

When it has been decided to take a house, and the locality chosen is one that is likely to be agreeable for some years to come, and the site is found to be healthy, it should be seriously taken into account whether or not it is practicable to purchase the house by paying for it in a fixed number of instalments, equal to a rental, perhaps, but terminable within a limited time. To go on paying rent for years, then to leave a house with no more right to a brick or stone in its building than when you first entered, is a spendthrift course, with only one point in its favour—viz., that of having liberty to change house or locality at will. This freedom is often dearly paid for. But the house that is going to be your very own some day becomes your friend; you take pride and pleasure in it, and it responds to the care you lavish upon it. Moreover, if by the time you have finished paying for it circumstances should oblige you to leave it, you have something as a possession that will bring you additional income in rental, or you can, with little difficulty, find a purchaser. A good house in a good locality seldom proves to be an unwise investment.

Several insurance houses are now offering facilities to their clients in the way of house-purchase policies, and their terms, generally speaking, are more advantageous than those of the building societies. Insurance houses have of late years found increasing difficulty in finding profitable investments for their funds, and it is surprising that they have not turned their attention to this field before. Those who go house-hunting and house-choosing will do well to inquire into such-like facilities, and see how they may avail themselves of this help, before deciding to pay rent on the old plan. On some of the estates which have been laid out for building special arrangements for the purchase of houses have been made by the building company.

It is a duty to consider every point before deciding any single question, but this great one of effecting some economy on the rent charge is one that should be weighed on every possible side. In no better way can you relieve your income.

Rents, as a rule, are proportionately cheaper the farther you go away from the centre of the City, but against that factor has to be set increased railway or other travelling expenses. The amount of the assessment, as is remarked in the letter we have quoted, is one to be heeded in judging the real saving in rent, as rates are based upon that. In taking over a house from a previous tenant, the incoming one should demand to see the previous quarter's statements and the amounts that were paid, and not trust to approximate or average calculations. Take care to see all the papers, not forgetting the gas and water rates. Find out the exact amount of railway fares, including the ordinary as well as the season tickets, as this will be a consideration to your friends as well as to yourselves. In living at a distance, it is a good rule to require that the increased cost in travelling shall be compensated for by reductions in rent and rates. Two means of travelling is certainly an advantage, and now that tramways are being extended this is becoming general. Electric trams are opening up some of the further and most rural districts round London, hitherto only accessible at holiday times, and for the man who can spare an extra thirty or forty minutes per day and a sixpenny fare, some of the loveliest reaches in the Thames Valley and Surrey lanes may be his daily refreshment.

On the other hand, it should be remembered, that it is not always summer in our climate, and that in the months of leafless trees and searching winds a country ride may not be so healthful as it seems, so that the desirability of two means of travel becomes almost a necessity. In North London, on the whole, the railways offer cheaper and faster train services than in the southern districts. But with every new development in the way of transit greater facilities are being offered by competing companies, and these are all worthy of careful study.

After the consideration of locality, and the amount of rent or rent-purchase that it is reasonable to pay, comes the question of the type of dwelling. Many people are totally ignorant of the really large selection that is open to them when they will take the trouble to inform themselves more fully.

Since the passing of the Act of 1890 for the Housing of the Working Classes, municipal action, under new powers, has led to much healthy rivalry in private building as well as to many philanthropic undertakings. The result is that we have a considerable variety of types to choose from—although, perhaps, not a considerable number of vacancies!—all of them healthy and sanitary dwellings, with modern conveniences and fittings that seem almost luxurious in comparison with the small house of a few years ago. The best architects of the day have found it worth their while to give attention to designing these, and many of the buildings, even if they are block buildings, are not only up-to-date in all that they offer, but they are pleasant and artistic homes. The difficulty of choosing from among them is generally less, however, than might be supposed, for, great as the number is that have been erected, only the fringe of the need has been touched. There is an ever-growing army of those who are clamouring for housing under conditions that make life worth living. Let us, however, see, by means of a brief bird's-eye view, something of what has been done in various localities.

The variety of types from which the man of modest income may choose a dwelling may be grouped under four classes—*i.e.*:

Block dwellings (tenements and flats).
House and cottage tenements.
Villas and cottages.
Garden cities.

The block dwelling is a large building of several stories, in which groups of rooms are formed round main staircases. Some of these are "self-contained" and some are "associated." In the first case the tenant has bathroom, w.c., and scullery or laundry all his own; in the latter case these conveniences are shared between two or between three tenants. In some cases the laundry or wash-house is common to several tenements. Associated tenements are usually much cheaper than those which are "self-contained." The number of rooms in the tenement will vary according to the rent and according to position and other accommodation. A living-room and one bedroom and offices, or living-room and two, three, or four bedrooms, with entrance lobby, closets, and pantries, and laundry accommodation, are usually arranged for in most of the block buildings. A few have also single-room tenements, which means a good-sized bed-sitting-room with scullery. Block tenements are usually entered from an outside staircase, generally of stone, and dados of tiles or glazed bricks are placed along these and the passages to obviate frequent redecoration. The staircases, generally speaking, are well lit, and kept clean by the company or other authority. Provision for cycles and perambulators is made on the ground-floor.

The weekly rents of block tenements run from 3s. to 4s. for one room, 4s. to 7s. 6d. for one living and two bed rooms, 6s. to 9s., 10s., and 12s. 6d. for larger tenements.

The drawback to this type of dwelling is the close association with a great variety of people of differing tastes and ideas, and the impossibility of feeling any sense of proprietorship in the home made under such conditions. Nevertheless, they are healthy and conveniently situated, and always sanitary dwellings, and many are only too glad to be able to have the opportunity of living in them.

The cottage tenement is built in cottage style, with two or three floors. Each floor is a separate tenement. The accommodation will be similar to that before described—viz., living-room and one, two, three, or four bedrooms, w.c., and bath-room. Many have separate front-door and staircase to each floor. There is generally a strip of garden ground allowed to each floor. Within a few miles of London there are a good many of these attractive tenement cottages, and the rents are comparatively low—that is, from 7s. 6d. to 11s. per week, generally inclusive of rates and taxes.

The self-contained cottage or small house is, of course, the beau-ideal of the man whose income will permit him to think of it; and in every direction the demand for this type, modern in style and fitted with modern conveniences, far exceeds the supply. Those which are built for greatest effect and greatest cheapness will be full of serious defects, while the plainer and less attractive exterior will generally be found to cover a far more solidly-built and more conveniently planned abode. One large living-room, a well-fitted kitchen in which some meals could be eaten, with scullery for rough work, makes the most satisfactory dwelling. The staircase ascending to the three or four upper rooms should start from the hall or lobby, not from the living-room, "quaint" though this may be in picturesque effect. The bath is very often placed in the scullery in this type of house; but this is not a good arrangement, and it is better to spare a portion from the kitchen or another room and have a separate bathroom.

The sink in the kitchen should be in a recess with cupboard doors, with place for pails underneath. The dresser can be made much more commodious than it generally is, and should have doors before the shelves, and the pantry or food-cupboard should have ventilation into the outer air. These improvements are all being carried out in some of the newest cottages which are being built.

Such a cottage (and the villa is merely a magnified type with an additional sitting-room) should meet all the requirements of a family of moderate size and moderate means, and should do much to foster the cultivation of the home spirit. Those who can afford a rental of

£28, £30, or £35 per year, should make every effort to secure a dwelling of this type, and if one is found in a locality that appears likely to remain suitable for a number of years, it would be cheaper to negotiate for its purchase than to pay rent.

With regard to dwellings in or near London, Mr. James Cornes, in his book on "Modern Housing," tells us that ever since the formation of the London County Council (in 1889) active work has been going on in connection with the clearing of sites and rebuilding of dwellings for working people; the Borough Councils have been almost equally energetic in the much shorter space of time that they have been in operation. Nearly all these schemes are so arranged as to be remunerative, so that they do not make charges upon the rates. Roughly speaking, about 100,000 inhabitants have been provided for since the first schemes were started. Some of the clearings and buildings are quite in he midst of London proper, like that of the Boundary Street Estate in East London, the Millbank Clearing at Westminster, the John Street Buildings, Marylebone, and many more; but others have been developed within the wider area of Greater London, in open districts like Tooting, Tottenham, Hornsey, and Highgate.

At Tooting, which is a district well served with cheap tramways, there are a variety of model dwellings, mostly of the cottage type, containing living-room and kitchen-scullery on the ground-floor, one to three bedrooms above, at rentals of from 6s. to 7s. 6d. per week, and larger cottages of the true country type, containing more and larger rooms, at rentals of from 8s. to 12s. per week. In the north the Tottenham and Totterdown Fields Estates are being developed on quite ideal lines, similar, indeed, to the model villages of Bournville and Port Sunlight. At Lordship Lane, Tottenham, the dwellings are of four classes, at rents varying from 6s. to 12s. per week. The designs are so good and the dwellings so well built that they are not likely to degenerate in course of time, as in some other instances there is a fear of their doing, but they become an asset to the district and a good investment for the intending purchaser. Those who are limited in means may consider themselves fortunate if they secure one of these for a home.

At Hornsey, near Nightingale Lane, the District Council have achieved yet greater things in the way of cheap housing. They have laid out streets with houses of two classes, the first containing sitting-room, living-room, itchen and scullery, and three bedrooms, to et at 8s. 6d. per week, and the second one itting-room, kitchen, scullery, and two bed- ooms, to let at 6s. 6d. per week. In a second cheme, in the same neighbourhood, they have aid out dwellings of four classes—the larger aving four bedrooms, at 11s. 3d. per week, anging down in number to those containing wo bedrooms at 6s. 6d. per week. At Highgate the same Council has erected forty-eight ottages on the same artistic and well-planned ines.

To the administrators of the Peabody Trust re due the erection of more than 200 blocks f modern dwellings for working people in arious parts of London. The buildings are n blocks, generally five stories high, with the xception of the centre, where laundries and an nclosed drying-room raise the building to six stories. The tenements are divided into sets of ne, two, and three rooms, to let at rentals of 3s., 5s. 6d., and 6s. 6d. per week. On the Peabody Estate at Herne Hill there have been rected eighty-two cottages of five rooms each t 8s. 6d. per week, exclusive of taxes.

The Battersea Borough Council have been more ambitious, and have adopted three distinct types of buildings, or, rather, of houses, to which they supply electric lighting. There are four-room tenements, three-room tenements, and houses of five rooms let in two floors. In the last named each tenant has a separate staircase and entrance, and the upper tenant has a back staircase to descend to his own private back-garden. The whole of these tenements and houses have baths fixed in the sculleries, with combined copper and range. All the floors are concreted, with steel joists, so are practically fireproof. Sewers, drains, electric-lighting supply, and water-supply are all carried out on the estate. There are twenty-eight of the five-roomed houses, letting at total rents of 11s. 6d. per week, seventy houses with three rooms and scullery at 7s. 6d. per week each flat, seventy-three houses with flats of four rooms each and scullery at 10s. 6d. per week. The water-supply is of special purity here, and the electric lighting works out at less cost than its equivalent in gas. The streets and buildings cover an area of nearly eight acres, with three acres of open recreation ground. The success of the Latchmere Estate Scheme has encouraged the same Council to undertake another colony of dwelling land at the back of the Town Hall, which will be known as the Town Hall Estate.

The Camberwell Borough Council purchased some little time ago the stretch of meadow-land which forms the slope of the hill separating Camberwell from East Dulwich. The roads cut through this give frontage to ninety-three houses, mostly built on the two-tenement system, but of a distinctly superior and artistic class. There are bay-windows to the front rooms, also to the kitchens, giving ample light and sun; every inch of space has been utilized, and there are many unusual comforts and conveniences. The bath in the scullery has been partitioned off, and so more privacy has been obtained. The upper tenants have an additional bedroom, their rent being 11s. per week, that of the lower floors 10s. The forecourts are planted and kept in order by the Borough Council, and there is about 30 feet of garden-ground allotted to each tenant in the rear. These houses are invariably let before they are finished. The easy access to the City by tram, bus, and train makes this district a very favourite one.

For those who must live still nearer to town, there are many flats building in Chelsea, some facing on to the King's Road and others in Beaufort Street, where formerly stood old historic houses and great gardens. The soil is good here, and the situation open towards the river. Large blocks of tenement dwellings, after the latest patterns, have been erected by the Borough Council, called the Sir Thomas More Buildings. Most of these have a lobby entrance and balcony. The larger tenements have living-room and two bedrooms, scullery and lobby. The bath-rooms are in a rear block, with the laundries and drying-rooms, and hot water is procurable at any time of the day. There is a gas cooking-range in each scullery, in addition to the larger fireplace in living-room. The rents range from 6s. 6d. per week to 9s.

Those who can afford a rent of £45 to £60 per year will find the larger flats on the other side of Beaufort Street most admirable. They have every modern convenience and a pleasant outlook, both back and front. There are four large rooms, kitchen, scullery, larder, bath, and w.c., with service.

There are many good old houses in Chelsea and Kensington which are let off in floors, made self-contained, and these make most comfortable dwellings for the married couple without children, or for bachelor chambers.

Those who contemplate building their own dwelling, or purchasing one already built, and want country surroundings, should turn their attention to the offers made by the Garden City Estate Company, at Letchworth. The land is let in plots at ninety-nine years' lease at a fixed ground-rent. An advantage is that the ground-rents are not absolute outgoings, for a considerable portion of the money is retained for purposes usually paid for out of rates, such as construction and maintenance of roads and sewers, schools, etc. The present rental of building-land for cottages and larger houses, carrying with it the above advantages, is, according to position, from £10 to £25 per acre. Not more than twelve houses are permitted on an acre of land, but as much garden ground as he wishes for may be obtained by any tenant beginning to build. The ground-rent of a "cottage plot" in the town area, of fixed size, is from £1 to £3. The county and local rates, including poor and education rates, are from 3s. to 3s. 6d. in the £. The railway season ticket to Letchworth is, of course, a large item at present, but as the population grows greater facilities will be offered, and this will be reduced. At present the express service to Hitchin from King's Cross is forty minutes, and to Letchworth it is fifty minutes. The restrictions as to space will prevent possibility of over-building, therefore the Garden City will not be likely to lose its country character in the future, even when it has found room for its full complement of tenants—a possible 30,000. But the modern conveniences of electric lighting, telephone, and telegraph, quick transit, and social advantages, will make the city practically independent of the Metropolis, not merely a superior suburban area. The provision of schools and churches is occupying the attention of the authorities, and public buildings for various purposes will be erected in process of time.

Some attempt at co-operative living is to be tried at Letchworth, with the intent of simplifying the work of housekeeping for those who have business occupations to carry on, yet wish to keep their separate home as dwelling. In fact, there are many points about the forward movement known as the "Garden City" idea which appeal to those who see a better future arising for all who are willing to set aside old prejudices and adapt themselves to the requirements of a new time. The attempt designs to satisfy the instinct for sociability which makes people gather together in towns, with that necessity for separateness essential to healthy living, and the modern woman, as well as the modern man, should be quick to see that this is the line by which progress in the science of living will be attained, and that it is one of the best ways in which the answer to the vexed question of Where to Live will be provided.

The ideal here sought after is that the City shall grow out of the Garden, keeping unspoiled the natural features of the country in which it is situated. Also it is desired that, as far as possible, the building materials which lie readiest to hand should be used, and that luxuries of adornment in architecture should be subordinated to soundness of wall and roof, with ample space for Nature herself, so to speak, to absorb these materials into the lines of the scenery. The Garden is there, and it is intended that the City shall grow out of it without ostentation, or otherwise it would quickly lose its charm and real value. Those who love the country for its own sake will readily acknowledge the wisdom of such a line of procedure.

II

REASONABLE "LIVING"—THE FOOD-SUPPLY

When locality and the amount of rent which can be afforded and other kindred considerations have been settled, the next great item in household expenditure will be that concerned with the food-supply. This cannot be a question of what is the lowest amount per head that is to be considered necessary. Food represents fitness, and means the maintenance of individual fitness of man, woman, and child. Low bills and cheap living, if they mean poor health and calls from the doctor, are not really cheap, and certainly not "reasonable" living. Of course it is quite possible to obtain the elements for the sustenance of life for 4d. and even for 2d. per day, as some faddists preach, but it is not possible to maintain health and fitness for work, nor to meet the varying needs of a number of different people with differing habits and constitutions on a regimen like that.

In looking over a number of lists furnished out of the experience of many housekeepers, one is struck by the sameness which prevails in them all where food is in question. Some appear to limit themselves to the same joints per week, the same round of puddings, the same breakfast-dishes. Those who have the least money to spend are the most afraid of attempting to break the routine. Only the few who are able to afford a more liberal outlay try for variety, or use uncommon materials. But is this economy? Or, if it is economy, is it not a very narrow and immature conception of it?

FOOD AND NUTRITION.

Briefly put, the day's food stands for the day's thought and work. Good, bad, or indifferent food will mean good, bad, or indifferent health—that is, capacity for work and interest in life. Into the hands of the housekeeper is put a power, mightier than she is half aware of—the power to build up body, and through body the soul, into a strong and beautiful manhood and womanhood.

The object we have, then, in providing daily meals is to secure for all who eat them the most suitable and best type of *nutrition*, and this, not merely so far as our means allow, but often in spite of the limitation of means!

The "lamp of life" is a very old but very apt simile used in speaking of the human body. The light obtained by the consumption of oil in the lamp corresponds to the vitality and force obtained from the consumption of food. The full-grown man or woman in active life takes in daily, through mouth and lungs, about 8½ pounds of dry food, water, and air—for air is a food when considered in this sense. Through the pores of the skin, the lungs, the kidneys, and intestines, there is a corresponding waste occurring, and in the course of a year this intake and outflow reckoned together amount to 1½ tons, or 3,000 pounds per person.

What are the elements that make the oil which keeps alight the human lamp of life? As the lamp is composed of flesh and blood, bone, cartilage, sinew, muscle, hair, and skin, to nourish these, to feed the brain, and to fill the lungs, we require:

Water, which we find in food, as well as in drinks, in fruits, vegetables and milk, and in its own pure form.

Fat, found in butter, lard, rendered animal fat, in milk, cream, cheese, beans of all kinds, nuts, cocoa, and chocolate.

Sugar, which abounds in ripe fruits, some vegetables and starchy grains, and its own pure form.

Starch, which in the mouth becomes grape-sugar, or glucose, and is found in farinaceous foods, potatoes, and cereals.

Flesh foods (or blood-making foods) found in meat, fish, eggs, and milk.

Salts, acids, and minerals are found to some extent in all animal and vegetable foods, together with phosphorus, lime, and magnesia, but need to be supplemented with common salt or sodium. When taken in moderation, salt helps to keep the blood pure. The necessary acids we find in fruit of all kinds and in condiments. Mineral matter is present in nearly all vegetables, and sulphur we find in eggs.

Muscle is the first requisite for a strong body, and flesh and blood are muscle in perfect condition. Flesh and fat should not be confounded. Fat is the layer of wadding beneath the skin which rounds off the muscles and keeps the body warm, but more than sufficient for this means extra weight to carry, and is the beginning of disease, since it tends to clog the organs and prevent their working. Bright spirits, alertness of mind, capacity for endurance, and equability of temper, are signs of

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good health; therefore, when we see dulness and irritability, slow and weary movements, we may be sure that the organs are not working properly, and that the lamp of life is in need of careful attention.

But we must not forget, in laying stress on the importance of suitable and nutritious food, that food of the best will not keep anyone in health without air. Though it may not be possible to live on air, we cannot live or even digest food without it, and it would astonish many to know how large a part air plays in their life, and how much of the actual weight of the body is due to it. In a full-grown man, whose weight will average 154 pounds, 111 pounds of this total weight will be oxygen drawn from the air he breathes. The food he takes into his stomach must be dissolved there, and only becomes blood by contact with the oxygen of the air in passing through the lungs, so that it has been well said that the lungs are the true stomach, and the stomach itself is a food receptacle. When oxygen finds admission it begins to produce heat, increasing the action of every organ, and burning up the waste of the body. Its entrance creates warmth and vitality, and its exclusion produces cold and death. Those who live in badly-ventilated rooms are always cold. Deficient ventilation will bring on diseases of the internal organs, because it reduces vitality and causes bloodlessness.

We need feeding with air at night as well as by day, and it is not sufficient to breathe pure air and live out of doors a great deal unless we sleep in fresh air at night also. The size of a sleeping-room is of little consequence if you keep the window open, but not even the spacious bedroom of a palace contains enough air to feed even one occupant for a whole night through without ventilation. Better stint in food rather than stint in air, and both must work harmoniously to produce perfect nutrition.

Let us now take food by itself and see how we may find out the kind and the proportion which should be procured to supply the needs of the ordinary family or individual. A great deal, of course, depends on the character of the work that is being done. Where the occupation of the breadwinner is a sedentary one, taxing the mental faculties, his diet will need to be of a more expensive kind, though less in amount, than if he were doing outdoor labour. He is only properly fed on that which he digests, and his digestion is often feebler than that of another man whose brain is less taxed. His opportunities of getting pure oxygen are also likely to be limited in number. He therefore needs a light, easily digested, nourishing diet, not of great amount, but varied. A light and varied diet is equally necessary for the woman who works at home; but she can do with plainer meals if she has plenty of household work which gives her exercise, and she breathes fresh air. The children who work at school need plenty of nourishing diet, too, but plainer food and far simpler than that of the man whose mental and nerve strain is great. They take part of their food in outdoor play in fresh air. Many a city business man or clerk is far from properly nourished, as his pallor and thin frame shows. The artisan or mechanic, whose work is rougher, and whose style of living is plainer, can live more cheaply than the clerk can afford to do, even where their incomes may be identical in amount.

In studying a chart of food proportions just lately, it was interesting to find that the largest total amount, both of heat-giving and flesh-forming foods, was needed at the age of twenty-four years. Up to that age the rise in amount was steady and gradual, then it slowly declined, by a few ounces only, to the age of thirty-six, after which the lines ran horizontally until about the forty-fourth year, and from there made a steady downward decline until in old age it became little more than in infancy.

A baby, for the first nine months of life, requires nothing but milk for the supply of all that it needs for growth and living. A crust of sweet bread soaked in milk, a little bread-and-butter, or light porridge, may vary its diet after then; but milk is the staple until the back teeth begin to show. Up to seven years, milk and bread-and-butter are the staple food for any child, and many physicians exclude all meat until then, but a little gravy with vegetables, and simple puddings, are both good and digestible. Plenty of ripe fruit, and sweets in moderation, are the natural craving of young children. Of perfectly simple food, without stimulants, few children will eat too much, and natural appetite may be left to settle the amount. It is when fanciful things are introduced that the need for restriction comes in. No child should have the food of its elders until it is sharing their life in other ways.

Boys and girls who are attending school later, especially the higher schools, require much care to be given to their food. The studious, and those who afterwards take to desk work, will need a light but varied diet, and often require encouraging to eat; but they will need still more encouragement to make them take sufficient exercise to insure their getting the full amount of fresh air they require. If appetites are very small and fickle, inquiry should be made to find out what is being indulged in between meals, as the craving at this period is for sweets and pastry. Every effort should be made to keep the brain from being clouded by poisons arising from undigested and unassimilated matter. And this applies equally to the man at work in confined office or warehouse. Those who lunch in the City should take a brisk walk in the most open space they can find, and grudge every minute they cannot give to being out of doors at this hour. To ride all the way to business by bus or train, reading all the time, to linger in a close and heated refreshment-room, still reading, and to ride back at night, poring over a book, is sufficient to render anyone pale and listless, susceptible to colds, narrow in chest as well as in mind.

The youth who goes in for athletics, and the man who has much muscular work to perform, know that superfluous fat is an impediment to efficient use of the limbs, and strength the first necessity. Fat-producing foods are struck out of their bill of fare. Lean meat, under-done rather than over-done, green vegetables, dry crusts and toast, fruit, but no puddings, are the staple. This diet makes hard muscles and a clear skin. It is a capital diet for those who would rid themselves of superfluous fat in ordinary conditions. Severe mental work could not be kept up on it, however.

As old age advances, the natural desire for food lessens, and warm liquids are found most acceptable. Small quantities of nourishing food, chiefly in liquid form, should be given at shorter intervals. Grandfather and grandmother should have meal-times of their own, as a rule.

At all times of life, in all professions or trades, the fundamental rules for keeping body and mind in good health are the same—that is, suitable food, fresh air to breathe, sunlight, and personal cleanliness. By following these rules, health may be maintained right on to the end, and there need be no fear of paralysis or disease.

Marketing for Value.

Where the income ranges from £150 to £300 a year, and the family consists of man and wife with two or three children of school age, the food-bill ought not to be less that £1 per week, and need not be more than £1 10s. for the keeping of a really nice table. This will not, however, include the husband's midday meal in the City. To make the amount cover everything, and do it well, will mean very careful buying, but still more careful cooking. If she is to provide abundance, and make a pleasant variety, the housewife will need to show herself skilful in management and in invention. Let her look at the matter from a business point of view instead of as a piece of daily taskwork, then she will inquire what are the best markets in which to deal, which the most profitable joints, and where and how may she avoid paying double profits. In buying from the small dealer, shop or van, close at hand, she must expect to pay something for the convenience. The tradesman who sends horse and van round for orders has, of course, to add on the upkeep of that, as well as wages of man or boy, to the price of the articles he sells.

The housewife who would obtain the maximum of profit and quality must go to the markets herself, and choose for herself, and pay cash for what she buys. There is no comparison in the freshness and quality of food that is so bought (especially in the wholesale markets) and that which is purchased and sent home from a suburban shop, as there is often no comparison between the vegetables which the honest coster has to sell and those of the greengrocer! It needs discrimination and some exertion, of course, to buy in this way, but unless fares will prevent savings from being made, it is well worth while where there are a number to feed. A penny saved here and there means much on a small income, especially if in the saving there is a gain in quality and weight. It is, indeed, only in pence that the possessor of a small income is able to make savings at all. But it is also in pence, unnecessarily spent here and there, that leakages are made which drain away the income.

The central markets of London, and the large stores, are the cheapest places at which to deal, and cheap living is far more possible for the London dweller than for the suburban, the provincial, or the real country household. A weekly journey up to the centre from the suburbs, for the thrifty laying out of money at the stores, and for a visit to the wholesale markets just before they close in the late afternoon, would keep the housewife's store-cupboard well supplied, and afford many a choice bit of fish or poultry for her table that never could be obtained for it in any other way. Beautiful "live" cod and halibut, even soles, are to be had for a few pence at this time, and game birds are sold off remarkably cheap. Bargains in ham and bacon, cheese and fruit, may also be obtained, while at the stores, by buying groceries in bulk, every advantage is given in discounts and reductions, and the carriage is generally free.

A monthly purchase of groceries and dry goods is more economical than a weekly one, for soap and candles are cheaper in bulk, and the first-named goes twice as far after keeping some time before using. Tea is cheaper by the small chest, or by three pounds at a time. The economical housewife will avoid buying things which are done up in packets of quarter pounds, knowing that she pays for paper and labour, and has a lighter weight as well as inferior quality.

Those who have absolutely no storage room are excusable in being small purchasers, and this is a consideration that should be taken into account when deciding to live in flat or tenement. The fractional differences in prices may seem hardly worth counting, but these littles mount up to really astonishing sums in the course of a year, and the ability to lay in coals in the summer-time, to buy wood by the hundred instead of the dozen bundles, to buy dry goods by quantities, potatoes by the sack, and so on, should influence those who are looking at a country house or cottage.

The housewife who sets out to do her marketing in this way will enlarge her mind each time she does it. She will find that some of her prejudices are without foundation, and that her resources are greater than she had supposed. For instance, in buying meat—a prejudice, natural enough, has existed against frozen meat, for its cheapness was generally counteracted by the waste of water and fat after cooking. But we have nowadays practically *no* frozen meat. That which comes to us from Australasia and Argentina is simply chilled sufficiently to have arrested deterioration, and it reaches us exactly in the state in which it was first sent off. It is fresh meat directly it comes into ordinary temperature. It is well-fed, well-grown meat, and greatly to be preferred to the bulk of that called "English," which is merely foreign bred, killed on English ground, after suffering much by live transit. Very little real English-grown meat, by comparison, comes into the market. A good joint of Colonial meat, and a good brand of Colonial butter, with other dairy produce, found and kept to, would furnish the table well, and not drain the pocket as does the attempt to provide the same thing with this mistaken idea of values in the mind. If housekeepers were better informed as to the manner in which food is brought to the markets, and as to the sources from which it comes, shopkeepers would have less temptation to seek after chances for obtaining extra pence in labelling their goods as they do.

In catering for families, the proportion per head becomes less according as the number is greater. It is inevitably higher where there are but two to provide for, and higher still for one alone. The unmarried man will often find that he spends as much per week on food for himself only as would provide for a wife who had some knowledge of common thrift. Save in increased rent and incidental extra expenses, a man does not greatly increase his living expenses by marrying. A single man can rarely live as cheaply as a single woman, except where both are in residential clubs, similarly situated. Taking it all round, where a week's food will cost 10s. for one, it will rarely amount to more than 16s. or 17s. for two, or to more than 6s. a head for four persons. Where the household is larger, and 8s. or 9s. per head can be allowed, game and other luxuries are easily to be had. This allowance should suffice where some small amount of entertaining is done.

Many professional people, clergymen, doctors, and others, whose incomes are larger than those of the city employé, are yet forced to keep down their actual living expenses to quite as little on account of superior rents being necessary for them, and more dress. But their table will have to appear better, the cookery must be more ambitious, the dishes more varied. The money, therefore, needs laying out with the utmost carefulness. A housewife of this rank will need to watch market prices, and do much shopping herself, if she is to procure the dainties she would like at possible prices. The experience of one such wife may here be quoted. She says:

"Some weeks we have less meat and more fish and poultry. Then there are items on the grocery list, such as essence, pickles, sauces, etc., which, of course, are only bought occasionally; but a couple of shillings per week spent upon the store cupboard keeps that replenished. If a sovereign is invested at the outset in grains, seasonings, spices, herbs, and bottles of sauces, it will be an easy matter afterwards to keep the cupboard supplied, and the cookery is infinitely improved by having these resources at hand."

Where there are young children in a household it is very bad economy to save on the milk bill, or to give jam as a substitute for butter. The substitute they should have is good beef dripping or bacon fat, especially at breakfast-time. Children require plenty of fat in more than one form, and sugar is not the same thing, although equally necessary. A liberal allowance of well-made bread with butter, and milk, will rear a healthy child, and form the foundation for healthy manhood and womanhood. Porridge is certainly good food for growing boys and girls, if they digest it, and if made of genuine Scotch oatmeal, but a sloppy mess of rolled and floury oats is *not porridge.* Plenty of fresh vegetables should be seen on the table for the children's mid-day meal, cooked in various ways, as vegetable soups or savoury stews, and very little meat will serve them when this is the case. Stewed fruit and a milk pudding might form the children's supper in summer-time as a change from bread and milk. A little wholesome homemade pastry, when well baked, is no harm to them, nor is cake, provided it is not rich and heavy. Currant bread and dough cakes would often make an excellent substitute for plain bread at very little extra cost. Currants, when chopped before using and well masticated in the mouth, are splendid food, and it is said that the Grecian ladies owe their beautiful complexions to their fondness for this fruit. A liking for cake is a very pardonable preference, whether shown by children or grown-ups; in fact our ideas about bread and cake might well be enlarged in their application. It is a great mistake to order a delivery of loaves, the same in number and kind, to be made from the baker's cart, day after day, week in and out, year after year. Such bread does not form the staff of life. What is needed is sufficient variety in form and make, in material and shape, as to quicken appetite by its very appearance, because this "quickening of appetite" means setting the gastric juices to assist the work of digestion. Crisp rolls and toast, biscuits and bread "sticks," all make desirable changes with the household loaf, and still give us substantial food.

A lady who has lived many years abroad, and whose own taste in all household matters and appointments is most dainty and fastidious, writes thus of her opinion of English notions of comfort:

"When in England I am generally visiting about in a great variety of houses, large and small, and I have various small standards of my own by which I can tell what things will be like in the way of comfort . . . in quite humble abodes . . . if there are nice little dinner-rolls on the table, and small supplies of toast within easy reach, I know that the meal, though it may be simple and inexpensive, will certainly be one that has had some thought expended upon it. But if by each plate there is a hunch of that terrible article, English 'household bread,' my spirits sink. And there are now in London, at least, so many good foreign bakers, that there is no excuse for this small detail of comfort not being attended to. . . . An occasional change of bread is a very acceptable thing, but it implies a little trouble in giving orders to the cook or tradesman."

While on the warpath in pursuit of bread, let me urge here the economy of making bread at home—provided, of course, that you can make it well. And with the introduction of that capital little machine—the "Three Minute Bread-Mixer"—and the absolute certainty that ensues when you follow the directions exactly, there is no reason why even the smallest household should not adopt home-baking. When you do this, the luxury of variety follows as a matter of course. There is no question about the saving of cost, for it is not merely that the given quantity of flour produces more loaves, but there is less likelihood of waste in the loaves themselves. Homemade bread does not dry so quickly; its crusts are sweeter, and instead of being a punishment they are a pleasure to eat. The white, puffed loaf that you buy, if eaten new, is gone directly, and when stale it is unappetizing. When you are making at home, study the price-list of some good miller and grain merchant; find out what flours you can purchase best, and then have a variety in store, mixing them as you make your different bakings, remembering that rice and maize, the various degrees of brown flour and oats, buckwheat and barley, all make nourishing bread.

The mention of rice reminds us that macaroni and other Italian pastes (one of the very nicest of which is spaghetti, the cost of which is fivepence per pound at any stores), present another most nourishing and digestible article of diet with which to vary our bills of fare. These materials are far too little used in England. Children would soon acquire a liking for nicely prepared dishes of macaroni, and when dressed with tomato sauce, gravy, or butter and cheese, a savoury supper-dish for the family is gained at very trifling cost. Those who wish to keep a dainty table will study the various dishes, such as croquettes, timbales, and fondues, which it is possible to make with spaghetti and vermicelli, and will add it to their soups also. Then, again, cheese, of which we do eat a good deal in this country, is really not appreciated according to its deserts. I am not alluding to the finer makes of ripe and choice cheeses; these we fully understand, but to those plain and cheaper makes of cheese which so soon get dry and stale—Dutch, Cheddar, etc. If you know how delicious is grated cheese, with soups and vegetable dishes, in sauces, or merely with bread and butter, you will never allow one scrap to be wasted, however dry. The dryer it is the better it will grate, and when grated it will keep good a long time in an air-tight canister. In Italy a dish of grated cheese appears regularly on the table.

And finally, before this subject of nutrition is dismissed, let a word be said in your hearing with regard to the economy of the best cookery. Only good cookery is cheap cookery. One might say that only the expert are really economical! That is because their treatment of food materials will make the most and best use of each kind, and also because when anything is well and properly cooked it is most easily digested. It is the food which is digested that nourishes and builds up the body, not that which merely staves off hunger and fills up space. But to cook well, and to make the best use of material demands that two factors be contributed by the cook herself; the first is the bestowal of sufficient time—not necessarily *all* her time, by any means!—to allow everything its fair chance of being properly done, and to give opportunity for using materials which cannot be used when meals are hastily prepared. The other indispensable factor is that of *interest* in the subject. Unless we are interested in anything we do not give our best powers to it, and it is to the intelligent interest which Frenchwomen and their daughters bring to bear on their cuisine that their successful cooking is due. They are not ashamed to talk about their work, or to discuss the food topic, and the kitchen is as often as not the meeting-place of friends and neighbours. It is not that they are born with an instinct for cookery, or that they are a whit more clever than their English sisters, or that they have materials to work with that are superior to ours. In nine instances out of ten, indeed, their materials are much inferior. But there is this vital interest put into the work; it is not merely one of the duties of a woman's life, it is one of her delights. Hence the difference. Why should it not be so in this country?

III

ECONOMICAL DRESS

Probably the next largest item in our list of yearly expenses will be that of clothing for the family. Upon the small income this will make a much larger inroad than it does, relatively, upon the larger one. Where a housewife has from £3 to £6 per week for the providing of house-rent and every other necessary, the amount that she may be able to set aside for clothes out of this will not be more than from 10s. to 15s., and this will, most generally, have to include underlinen, boots, and perhaps repairs. And this will mean clothing for the man who goes to business in the city, as well as for the tiniest toddler. The former, at least, must present a well-clothed exterior, and no wife worthy of her name will allow him to be insufficiently or uncomfortably clad underneath. On his side he should not ask for the finest of shirts and repeated additions to his wardrobe in the way of collars and ties; in any case, however, clothing for the head of the family will bulk the largest on the list, because it cannot be manufactured at home. Many men pay their tailor's bill on the instalment plan, and say that if they did not do so they could never get clothes at all; but it is certain that in the end this must be more expensive, for accommodation must also be paid for. The suit for which 70s. is paid will probably be not worth more than 50s., and will very soon show it is not worth more. The impecunious man and woman who place cut and style first often patronize the secondhand wardrobe dealer, for good suits and costumes may be obtained there, slightly soiled, for less than half their original cost. They will also be of good material and make, as they have come from fashionable wearers. But the risk of their fitting must be taken, and hence the suit made at a cheap tailor's is often preferred, in spite of its want of durability, simply because it is made for the wearer. Still the man or woman whose dress allowance is strictly limited is wiser to place durability and quality first, and fit second.

One of the best ways of economizing in dress expenditure is to simplify the amount and kind of underclothing worn. A man need look none the less smart if he wears woollen shirts with detachable collars and cuffs, and he will save many pence weekly. It is as right for him to consider this item and save upon it as for his wife to make with her own hands garments that she would far rather buy. A woman soon finds that she has made her most marked saving by adopting woven under-garments in place of cotton or cambric; with these and a spencer, knickers, and one moirette petticoat she is well and comfortably clad against all weathers. This is certainly the best style for those who go about much, being light to carry, while it reduces the washing bill to a minimum. Lawn and laces and frilled petticoats are luxuries for the rich, and it is pitiful to see working girls aping such fashion and paying money for the getting-up of petticoats that would never hang together if it were not for the starch that is put into them! Fewer outer garments are required by those who dress sensibly underneath, but the costliest fur coats will not keep anyone warm who has no wool against the skin.

Some people recommend the secondhand dealer's for the purchase of an outdoor suit or dress for a wife; but while there may be certain bargains to be picked up at times, and smart gowns are cheap, there are other disadvantages to bear in mind. The suit or dress may be smart and fashionable, of good material and beautifully made, but if it is unsuitable to the wearer's use and position, and out of accord with her usual style, or has the least suggestion of being "cast-off," its wear will prove unsatisfactory, and it will end by becoming a sort of white elephant to her. . . . Far better and more satisfactory will be the simpler gown made at home with the help of a sewing-machine (and a friend's kindly assistance to see to the fit and "hang"); it may cost as much money but it will be the most economical, unless the bought costume were exceptionally suitable. Skirts and blouses, both for winter and summer wear, should, of course, be made at home, as they can so easily be in these days of cheap lengths and good paper-patterns. Outdoor coats, especially winter ones, it is foolish to attempt, for these are reasonable to buy if the right opportunity is chosen. Good coats are sold off at the end of the winter sales, and there is a long spell of weather when they will be needed still to be anticipated, and they are ready and fashionable for the next autumn. Indeed, a well-cut and well-fitting coat should last two or three winters without looking out of date. A "between season" garment, coat or cloak, is almost a necessity in our variable climate, and this is generally purchased at the summer sales. A light-weight tweed is always good wear. As a rule, the best bargains in coats are to be met with in the leading houses, although it may seem incredible to such as would not dare to venture inside those show-rooms on ordinary occasions. The reason is that the stocks here positively must be cleared out before new goods come in, and the "sacrifices" are often absolutely genuine. The writer has it on the authority of a buyer in one of the leading West End houses that tailormade costumes there, in one particular week of the sale, are really marked down from four to one guinea, and from eight to two guineas.

Many excellent short lengths of silk and rocade, which would make durable and handome blouses, are offered by the good firms for shilling a yard, all round. As a rule the emnant sale is an occasion calling for cautious iscrimination, especially if it is one where the oods are sold at "half the marked price." he price has been marked up before it has een lowered, but by being watchful a genuine argain may sometimes be made. The sales in he lower class of shops are occasions for speculation; good purchases *may* be made, but the isk is that you will pay more than the ordinary prices for the goods offered at such marvellous reductions.

The woman who can manipulate a sewing-machine skilfully, and has not to pay for making up, can dress herself very well indeed, if she have reasonably good taste, on £8 or £10 per year. To do this she must, of course, forego the pleasure of purchasing novelties at the beginning of a season, and she must never buy a thing at the time she sees and thinks it a bargain, hoping to find a use for it later on. When that use does come she will invariably find she could have bought something afterwards that would have been far better. One good, well-cut and well-made skirt, of tweed, serge, or lighter material, should be a yearly investment, for wear with blouses, and this, with a light coat, will prove her stand-by for nine months of the year at least.

What the woman with but a small dress allowance at her disposal must beware of are trifling expenses, such as gloves, veils, and laces. These tempting trifles—"only 11¾d."—are often hard to resist, but they are snares and pitfalls. Buy only absolute necessaries of this kind, then buy them sufficiently good to last. One good pair of gloves will wear out three commoner pairs. The same applies to belts and ribbons, which, when carefully chosen, give a note of distinction to the simplest dress.

A great saving can be effected when hats are trimmed at home, as their cost will then be less than half the ordinary milliner's charges. But here, again, good quality in material is essential in order to make a really good result. But even more important is attention to the way in which hats are treated by their wearers; careful putting away into a proper receptacle directly they are taken off the head, brushing and straightening, smoothing ribbons and folding veils—all this does much to prolong their life, just as careless lying about in a room will harm them more than actual wearing. In fact, this applies to all articles of wearing apparel, and clothes very quickly resent neglect. It is these small attentions which mark the difference between the man or woman who is well-turned-out and the one who is "doubtful"; yet, invariably, it is the last-named who spend the most money on their attire.

Walking skirts should not be worn in the house, but a house dress should have its own special attractiveness, and never be a dowdy cast-off. For morning wear indoors a pinafore with long sleeves will keep the dress clean and free from spots, and this may itself be an artistic garment.

In talking familiarly with a French friend one day, the writer was much impressed with her remarks upon this great subject of dress. She was a person who in her particular locality held a position of some consequence, and would in England have been classed among "the gentry." In France, however, this is precisely the class which suffers most from straitness of means, fortunes being largely dependent upon the results of the tillage of their property; still, in a quiet way, she entertained and went out a good deal, and a yearly visit to Paris, partly for business and partly for pleasure, was included in her programme. Such visits were, of course, her occasions for genuine bargain-hunting, and she seemed to have developed a perfect genius for their discovery. But the secret of keeping a superior appearance, as she gave it in a confidential aside, was *la coupe et la façon* (the cut and making). Her consultations with her *couturière* resulted in perfect accuracy as to the fit of her bodices and the fall of her skirts, and every stitch was well placed.

Another friend, this time an Englishwoman, and one who has her husband's reputation as well as her own to maintain by her successful appearance, tells us that her walking gown or tailor-made suit, and her winter coat or cloak, are the items to which she allots all she can possibly afford. These must bear the hall-mark of a good house, and therefore they are costly. Nevertheless, she wears the best of blouses, and her silk petticoats are irreproachable. The secret with her lies in taking advantage of silk and special sales, and in her having trained an ordinary sewing-woman, by affording her opportunity of seeing how the best work is done, into a really excellent dressmaker. A circular announcing " A shilling a yard all round " for silk pieces and lengths of material that make skirts to wear with these blouses is the signal for an expedition up to town, and rarely does she come back without having obtained two or three new dresses for the ordinary price of one!

Boots and shoes must always remain among the heavier items in the clothes account, whether for grown-ups or children. It is never economy to buy cheap makes, but when growing days are over it is undoubted economy to buy them beforehand and hang them up for some months before wearing. They will last just twice as long if you do. A pair of boots or shoes costing a guinea, whose material is sound throughout, will outlast two or three pairs at 10s. 6d. The way to economize in footwear is to avoid wearing walking shoes in the house, and to straighten these when taking them off, putting them into their proper place. Light and soft shoes for the house also mean less wear upon carpets and linoleum, and children should be strictly watched to see that they change their outer shoes on coming in from school.

As to children's garments, it is possible for nearly all of them to be made at home, where a sewing-machine is owned, and if necessary the help of a sewing-woman can be called in. Stockings and shoes and outdoor coats should be really all that need be bought ready-made for girls, except it be straw or felt hats. Boys suits and overcoats may have to be purchased, but knickers to wear with blouses and tunics can be made by any woman who has once learnt how to cut them out. Pretty delaines and nun's veilings make summer frocks which wash easily, and velveteen, which also washes beautifully, makes capital best frocks for winter, with serge for every day. Long-sleeved overalls of holland or galatea make cool play-suits for boys, and covert coating makes the nicest little outdoor coats for all but the coldest weather.

Close-fitting caps and woollen tammies should be very carefully looked after, and their exchange with other children strictly forbidden; boys, and girls too, are very fond of throwing these about, and this may so easily be a means of bringing infection to themselves and of inducing ringworm. The linings of children's hats should be washed frequently, and, indeed, washing-hats are the most wholesome wear for the summer months. It is pitiful to see the unshaded faces of little children whose heads are made hot with the close-fitting fancy "grannie" bonnets that have been so much in favour with thoughtless mothers. For best summer wear, indeed, there are no prettier hats than the broad-brimmed Leghorn straws.

In studying the matter of children's clothing, one has to confess that it is too often a question with the mother of dressing them "prettily"—and for her own praise—instead of with regard for the children's own health and ease of body. The natural beauty of a healthy, bonny child can never be enhanced by smart clothes, but will itself set-off the simplest little garment by its own sweetness. As a whole, however, English mothers have learnt this, and the English child is a pleasure to contemplate in comparison with the over dressed Continental baby who is brought up as its parents' plaything. Nevertheless, even in this country we have not yet attained perfection.

IV

A GROUP OF EXPENSES

When the more important items of household expenditure have been allotted their share of the income, there still remain a number of others which, if comparatively insignificant when considered separately, amount to a good deal when taken together.

There is the question of assistant help in the house, involving the payment of wages; then, if the washing cannot be wholly done at home, there will be laundry charges; there should also be insurance payments, possibly club subscriptions, with other subscriptions, charities, and collections. There will invariably be some amount, more or less considerable, to set aside for household renewals and repairs, and a sum, whatever it is, which must cover the annual holiday and travel, with whatever we may allow for occasional amusements and for outings. There should be a margin left for possible needs in the way of medical attendance and medicines, and where the family is young there will be nursing and other contingencies to be estimated.

Where a fourth of the income has been allotted to rent, rates, and business travelling, one-half for food and dress, the remaining fourth must be made to cover all the above items, and it will readily be seen that this is not too large a proportion to allow. In considering the annual holiday there is, of course, the money that would ordinarily be spent upon food at home to be counted in. With regard to the economy of washing at home, when there is sufficient drying-space this should certainly be attempted, even if the finer ironing and starching have still to be put out, because the saving effected will be not only in money, but in the wear and tear of the clothes. Where no servant, or but one young one is kept, the help of a woman will be needed for the heavier washing, and perhaps for some cleaning besides. Where the family is a small one, and drying facilities are non-existent, it will be cheaper to put out all the washing, negotiating with a laundry to take them by the dozen, at an inclusive charge for large and small things. If the small family wash is done at home, with extra help, the woman's food and wages, with materials, may still amount to almost as much as laundry charges. On the other hand, where some washing can be done at home, and only finer things put out, an economy may be effected in this way. The question depends so entirely upon the position and number of the family, and upon the amount of skill possessed by the housewife herself, that it is impossible for anyone to say definitely which method is the cheapest. Laundry tariffs also vary a good deal in different districts; in parts of South London, for instance, where competition keeps prices low, collars and cuffs are done up for a charge of 6d. to 9d. per dozen, while in other districts a penny each is charged for collars and 1½d. per pair for cuffs.

Where it is decided, because of good drying-ground, to do all the washing at home, it will be the cheapest in the end to invest in a Bradford Washing Machine, for this will do the work of a woman without her wages or food, and if the wringer is attached it also does the mangling afterwards. Clothes washed in this way come clean with much less trouble and wear longer than when rubbed by hand. The mangling does away with any necessity for ironing sheets or even table-linen—except this be polished—and woollens wear far better when washed in such a machine.

As to the matter of assistant help in the work of the house, the wife who has only three or four pounds per week for all expenses will hardly be able to consider the servant question at all, as, apart from wages, there would be her food, lodging, and other costs. The help of a girl for a few hours per day may, however, be got quite cheaply in some districts, and unless there are young children to care for and nurse, this would be a sufficient amount of help for a small house, while in a flat two or three hours' work should see all the heavier part finished. Where a baby has to be taken out daily and nursed, it is well to have a girl to do this; or the better plan is to have a reliable woman to do the brunt of the housework, and while she is there, to take out the child and do the marketing at the same time, giving yourself daily exercise out of doors in the morning air. The baby should then sleep afterwards, allowing the mother an opportunity for finishing her household duties. As we shall come to the matter of training a young servant later on, it is unnecessary in this place to say more in regard to the kind of help that a larger household might afford.

With regard to club and insurance payments, all these should be carefully criticised before any are undertaken, for their benefits may be ques tionable. As far as life insurance is concerned, this may possibly be the only saving a man is able to make towards future contingencies, and it should be as large a one as he can afford to keep up. It is well for the wife to be insured also, and both may, if it seems best, have these for self-endowment or for life. The payment of these premiums obliges them to save, and if they had not this obligation the money might perhaps be spent less wisely. In taking out an insurance for a child, it should always be one for endowment at a specified age, as well as for contingent death before that period. This falls due, if arranged to terminate at the age of twenty-one or twenty-five, just when it is most useful for an outfit, for a marriage portion, or for a start in business. Life insurance has greatly developed within recent years, and the mere insuring against premature death is too poor an investment when we consider how much fuller its scope may be. Sickness and accident should both be included in the benefits, and the advantage of insuring on the endowment system is that it enables a man to make a better investment of his money, or to purchase an annuity for his life when the policy has matured. A fire insurance should be taken out by every householder, and furniture should also be insured against possible damage. Now that many offices accept monthly payments, the premiums are more easily met than when yearly and half-yearly payments were the rule. A man who has little hope of providing for his own or his wife's old age should take out a policy that is convertible into an annuity at a certain time on either life, or subscribe for a deferred annuity in the Post-Office Savings Bank.

In reference to household repairs and renewals, these should be accounted for by a definite sum set aside for the purpose each year, and if so spent there will be no need for great outlays in emergencies. It is by keeping up a house that its appearance is maintained, both inside and out, and that is the only way to avoid having great expenses. The lease may not be a repairing one, but even then there will invariably be some charges occurring during the course of a year, apart from decoration. It is better to renew furniture and kitchen utensils a few at a time, and it is bad economy to allow repairs to go undone. Where the lease is a repairing one, a certain sum should be set aside for redecoration each year, to avoid having too much to do at any one time.

As to holidays and amusements, neither of these items can be classed as necessaries of life, although desirable for the maintenance of mental and physical health. The yearly holiday away from home is most enjoyed when saved for beforehand, and occasional "evenings out" must remain a matter for individual judgment to decide upon. No amusement has been rightly afforded if it has involved the cutting down of some necessary to make room for it, and with the multiplication of cheap music-halls, the tendency to spend in this way and let other things suffer in so doing is apt to grow. It is argued that the cheap and harmless variety entertainment benefits by lifting people out of the monotony of their life, which, if unrelieved, tends towards depravity and even insanity. A few pence spent thus occasionally, it is said, is money well laid out. The question must be whether the uplift, if such it is, has been worth its cost, and if the benefit has been more than a passing pleasure. If an allowance can be made for these amusements without infringing any other right, and the benefit is felt to be worth its cost, by all means allow for such in calculating your expenses. One of the worst features of the argument in favour of cheap amusements is that the craving for them grows so rapidly that it is apt to pass from an occasional indulgence into being a necessity. The better things, such as reading-rooms and concerts, which are free of cost, then receive little attention.

It should be as much a question with us of how and where to get the best value for the money we lay out in amusements as it is for that we expend in other ways. Good living and wise living is many-sided, and it is quite true that we ought to consider the needs of the mind as well as those of the body; but let us seek the best quality in everything, and spend for that purpose.

V

FURNITURE AN INVESTMENT FOR CAPITAL

Good furniture, carefully chosen, is an asset for life, and by no means an unwise investment for capital; but cheap and inferior goods, though attractive to the eye at first, will deteriorate in wear, and instead of growing more valuable, will involve further outlay in future. This practically means that something must be written off from the capital each year for "depreciation."

Two artist friends of the writer's who had taken a flat in a large, old-fashioned house began their home with but the barest necessaries, and by degrees gathered together pieces of rare old oak, in coffer and table, sideboard and cabinet, valuable chairs, and a quaint settee, adding china in part-sets, and finally a real Turkey carpet that was half-worn. At any future time every one of these pieces could have been sold for its original cost, and if not necessary to part with it, nothing would deteriorate. Every article they possessed represented "real estate."

But not everyone has a taste for "antiques," nor are they suited to the modern cheap house. Moreover, such a house must be furnished throughout at the beginning, or the chances are that it will never be furnished at all. When the income is a salary that is likely to remain small for years, this complete furnishing at first will mean an investment of the savings of years, with other help perhaps, and therefore it is the visible embodiment of many sacrifices and self-denials, and is all the sweeter and more precious on that account. It also is an investment. The better the quality of the goods, therefore, the better the investment.

In some cases, where the income is small and savings have been impossible, it may be necessary to furnish the home on the hire-purchase plan; but this should be adopted only as a last resource, for it is the most costly, the most risky, and the least satisfactory method that can possibly be pursued. Far better begin with only one or two articles and buy the rest singly, week by week, or month by month.

But to burden oneself with a weight of debt and cripple the whole income for years with monthly payments is to start life heavily handicapped; moreover, there is always the risk of a time arising when it may be impossible to continue paying, and then the whole is lost; still worse, it means that fancy values are put upon everything that is bought in this way.

A tenement flat, in town or country district, may be well and comfortably furnished with necessaries, in good taste and quality, for £50; but a small house, with six or seven rooms, will need £100 to fit it with sufficient furniture of fair quality, and £150 or £200 or more can quite easily be spent upon it. These sums are not allowing anything for useful wedding gifts, on which it is not safe to calculate, for, according to the present indiscriminate practice of making such gifts, many of them have to be turned into money before they can become of any value! In our estimates, therefore, we have taken account of *all* the needful things, and if good presents are added thereto by the kindness of friends, then the home is all the better clothed.

Where a house is being built for its future owner, a thoughtful planning of its interior fitments in woodwork, etc., may save much buying of furniture. This adds to the cost of the building, of course, but not so much as the equivalent cost of pieces of furniture. It is quite possible to have wardrobes and chests of drawers, of varying shapes and sizes, with cabinets, corner cupboards, and window-seats with lids that lift and provide long box receptacles, fireside settles, and kitchen dressers, all built in; to do so makes a house infinitely easier to keep clean and free from dust than where each piece stands out and forms a lodging-place for dirt, and the rooms are hampered with movables and dustables. Where the fitments stand back and form part of the wall, the centre of the room is left open and clear, save for tables and chairs and beds. These can be choice of their kind, and the crockery and ornaments may be good as can be afforded, when money has been spared from other purposes.

The majority of people, however, have to take a house as they find it, in bare skeleton form, and they must clothe and beautify it according to the means at their disposal. The chief point to bear in mind is to avoid cheap imitations and stuff that is made to attract the eye but which will not stand wear. Cheap stained suites and bamboo furniture are found detestable by anyone who has artistic tastes, or who understands the elements of good form and colour. The word "artistic" should not mislead anyone, for it is as applicable to the whitewashed cottage as to the mansion. We use it in reference to line and colour and workmanship, and if we do this the plainest chair or table and the simplest curtain will be found pleasing. The façade of a Greek temple, for example, is perfectly in keeping on the Parthenon in Athens, but as the decoration of a timepiece for a cottage mantelshelf, it is utterly out of place.

William Morris, speaking of decoration, has defined it for us in these words:

"For (and this is the root of the whole matter) everything made by man's hand has a form that must be either beautiful or ugly—beautiful if it is in accord with Nature and helps her, ugly if it is discordant with Nature and thwarts her. It cannot be indifferent . . . the hand of the craftsman is guided to work in the way that Nature does, till the web, the cup, or the knife, looks as natural—nay, as lovely—as the green field, the river bank, or the mountain flint. . . . To give people pleasure in the things they must perforce use, that is one great office of decoration—to give people pleasure in the things they must perforce make, that is the other use of it."

An old proverb tells us that "where there's a will there's always a way," and if our houses and their surroundings are poor and mean, and it is out of our power to change them, there is no obligation laid upon us to live in mean rooms. "Often in a wooden house a golden room we find," another proverb tells us, and if we have made the interior golden we need not mind about the exterior. In choosing furniture, china, and glass, more regard should be paid to its form and design, and less to its "prettiness." Let the first question have reference to whether such and such shapes are convenient, sensible, and easy to clean, before looking to their effect. We never find Nature putting ornament before use; rather does she suit a thing to its purpose, and then leave it to grow beautiful.

When the house has been found, before beginning to furnish, it would be well to try to realize clearly what it might be capable of becoming — let it take shape ideally before putting it into actual form. There are natural inclinations towards beauty inborn to some extent, at least, in most men and women; let these have scope, and then we shall not have to mourn the blindness that makes people content to take the unbeautiful, the cheap and commonplace, and stay satisfied with it. We are breaking away from the conventional, utilitarian style of building as the newer types of cheap houses show; let us, then, avoid convention in our ideas of furnishing, and give individuality free play.

In order to frame useful averages, we will take the sum of £150 as that which we propose to spend upon the furniture for the modest house of six rooms. We are dealing with the ordinary suburban dwelling now, which has nothing beyond the ordinary type of fittings within, although it may be picturesque enough outside.

It has two sitting-rooms, kitchen, scullery, and offices, on the ground-floor, with small hall and staircase, and three bedrooms, with bathroom, above. If the two sitting-rooms are connected by folding-doors, it would be more economical and more picturesque to throw them into one, or at least to furnish them as one, and use the doors at discretion. The kitchen in this house should be pleasant and attractive enough to serve as morning-room, for breakfast, but the midday and evening meals should be served in one part of the best room, by the fireside in winter, by a pleasant window in summer. If, because of children, it is desirable to keep these two rooms distinct, it is better to make the front and larger room a family sitting-room, and use the back one for the children, and let the mother make this her workroom for sewing, etc. We need to combat the notion that a "drawing-room" is a necessity of life, and to give the best space we have to the daily needs of the family. The very possession of a drawing-room tends to expense; it is little use having one if you do not sometimes entertain friends, but the friends who cannot be admitted to the ordinary family living-room are not such as it is worth while to entertain.

The secret of success in furnishing is to have a good colour scheme to start with; a dingy outside does not prevent us from having a cheering interior, if we set about obtaining it in the right way. In towns we need to conserve all the light and colour we can, and it should be remembered that light colours really wear better than dark ones, that they increase the apparent size of small rooms, and that they are more conducive to health. In spite of prevalent smoke-grime, nothing wears better than white paint, if it be good enough to bear washing. White woodwork, and light cretonnes or materials that will stand the wash-tub, will give a brightness to any interior, simply by the feeling of freshness and cleanliness they create. Where white paint cannot be, or in a new cottage where paint is not necessary at all, nothing looks better than oiled pine or light oak. This woodwork, carefully cleaned, grows better and richer year by year. The furniture should be chosen to correspond, and, happily, in pine and light oak we may find excellent designs at really low prices, for some of our best artists have given their attention to this type of furniture of late; but while preeminently suitable for the country house or cottage, these quaint pieces in unpolished wood are not so suitable for the ordinary town house. Here, mahogany or walnut, or, if means allow, good dark polished oak, give the best result for a moderate outlay. Satinwood and antiques are only for those who have large sums to spend. Wooden overmantels and wooden picture-frames are always in good taste and pleasant to look at. Upholstered armchairs and settees are generally more comfortable than those with wooden frames, and a good Chesterfield is certainly a possession to be acquired. Some of these things may with advantage be looked for and bought from a secondhand dealer's, if the quality and cleanliness are unimpeachable. They should be of better value obtained in this way, and much cheaper than if bought new; still, when found and approved, go to the furnishing warehouse and compare the new with the old, before finally deciding on either, for the secondhand dealer is invariably good at making a bargain.

Roman or art carpets, bordered and reversible, when made of pure worsted, are to be found in excellent shades of colour, and their wear is most satisfactory, as they can be changed from side to side, over and over again. Rugs and stair-carpeting are made in the same good designs and quality. Serge makes excellent curtains and table-covers, and is often more pleasing than tapestry, but linens should replace serge in summer-time, because colour quickly fades near the window. Casement cloth or muslin or sprigged net should be chosen for those curtains which come close to the glass, as frequent changing and washing is absolutely necessary in a town. Nothing so detracts from the appearance of a room inside as dingy curtains.

On the above lines a good family living-room could be well and comfortably furnished (allowing for extra chairs) for £40; but if it is desirable to keep the two sitting-rooms distinct, making one a dining-room and the other a parlour—we will not say drawing-room—they may take at least £25 each. One suite of upholstered furniture, with walnut-wood frames, a Chesterfield, a good oak dining-table and four oak chairs, Roman or Brussels carpets and rugs, good curtains, suitable overmantels, and one or two smaller pieces of furniture could be obtained for this outlay.

The hall floor would be covered with a good linoleum of tile pattern and large mats, a light coat-rail and umbrella-stand, and perhaps a small table if space allows. This would run into £5. Plain felt of the best quality makes most satisfactory stair-carpeting, if Roman or Brussels is found too expensive, and with suitable paint and bright rods always looks well. Rods and carpeting would cost on an average £2. Good door-mats should be regarded as necessaries, for they save much needless making of dirt.

A best bedroom suite in light oak or satin-walnut, with double wardrobe and double wash-stand, can be obtained for fifteen or sixteen guineas, and wooden bedsteads to match (which give a far handsomer appearance to the room, and are more comfortable than the usual black iron and brass ones), would cost about five guineas more. The wooden bedsteads are, of course, fitted with spring mattresses exactly as iron ones are, the day of wooden laths being ended. A bordered Brussels carpet for this room would be most suitable and would average £1 10s. The bedding, including wire-wove mattress, wool mattress, feather bolster, and two pillows, would come to £3 3s. more. An art linen bedspread and curtains to match would be £1 5s., and with casement curtains £1 10s. Brass poles and fixings about 15s. more. Allow also 15s. for a double toilet set, or a guinea if special art shapes are chosen. With an additional guinea remaining for coal-box and curb or fire-irons, we have spent £30 on this room.

The two smaller bedrooms, one furnished for two occupants and the other for a single one, could have light painted suites or white enamelled wood, with brass and iron bedsteads, best bedding, and curtains of light cretonne, a woven reversible carpet or matting, keeping the cost of one to £12 and the other to £8. If the small room is to be for a servant, four or five pounds will furnish it admirably.

It is no economy to save on the furniture of the kitchen, but it must be especially well furnished when it serves for breakfast-room as well. Four comfortable chairs with rush seats and one armchair, a wicker or old-fashioned wooden one, and one large and one small table will be necessaries. Then the floor should be covered with cork linoleum, and a warm rug be placed before the hearth when the kitchen is in superior use. If the fixed dresser is not sufficiently commodious an additional one, or a cabinet to hold china will be required. Both dressers and cabinets ought to have glass doors before the shelves, for much labour in dusting would be saved if that were so. A carefully-chosen list of kitchen utensils, including turnery and brooms and all appliances, can be drawn up for £10. Having thus disposed of about £120 out of our sum of £150, we are left with £30 for linen, china and glass, and plate. This should afford us a sufficient and suitable outfit, of good quality, to last for some years.

Where the total expenditure has to be limited to £100, for the same number of rooms, less must be spent upon each of them by choosing suites of plainer make for the bedrooms, and limiting the two downstair rooms to £35. Even so, a very tasteful house can be achieved. There should still be the same margin allowed for linen, etc.; but where this is a gift, the plate and china also, of course we gain that £30 and add it to the price of better suites.

We give now a specimen estimate for the laying-out of £50 for furnishing a small country cottage or tenement-flat, where there is one living-room, kitchen, and two bedrooms.

	£	s.	d.
Living-room: Oak table, two large and two small oak chairs, two stuffed easy-chairs, small table, dresser-cabinet or sideboard, rugs, fire-irons, etc.	16	0	0
Kitchen: Table, two small chairs, two easy-chairs, rug, clock, and necessary utensils	8	0	0
Lobby: Coat-rack, umbrella-stand, mats, etc.	2	0	0
Best bedroom: Painted or stained suite, with crockery	8	0	0
Second bedroom: Painted or stained suite, with crockery	6	0	0
Curtains and quilts for both bedrooms ...	1	10	0
Linen	4	0	0
China and glass	2	10	0
Cutlery and silver	2	0	0
Total	50	0	0

In furnishing with so small a sum as this, a margin should be allowed on each year's expense for additions to be made to linen and china, as these will need renewing, since the first outlay only covers absolute necessaries.

The small houses which are let in two floors, as described in our first chapter, and the simpler cottages built at Letchworth, could be well and daintily furnished for the above sum. Where the floors are not boarded a thick matting will be found to wear better than anything else, but where boards are down, a cork lino and rugs, or stained boards and rugs, are infinitely preferable to cheap carpets, which are the worst of dust-holders. When there is a mixture of cotton in the weaving, the colour fades directly.

We now give detailed lists of kitchen utensils, of glass and china, linen and blankets, for the equipment of a small house.

In the kitchen utensils we are choosing, we bear in mind that it is a modern list that we need, for the modern kitchen, with neat gas range and cleanly contrivances, has no occasion for having heavy and cumbersome pots and pans. We choose such as are labour-savers, not labour-makers, and we choose also those which help to make our cookery more refined. The kitchen of a flat is generally small, but whether ours be small or large, we do not need to fill up the space with unnecessary and clumsy things, which entail polishing, and which add to the work of washing-up. As far as may be, we choose the best thing for the purpose to which it will be put, as this is the cheapest thing in the end.

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT.

	£	s.	d.
Three-minute bread-mixer	0	10	6
Knife-cleaning machine (Spong's)	0	11	9
Mincing machine	0	5	6

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT—*Continued.*

	£	s.	d.
Pair of steps	0	5	0
Family scales	0	6	6
Meat-safe and dish-guards (optional)	0	10	6
One enamelled and one block-tin kettle	0	5	0
Japanned water-can and enamelled pail	0	5	6
Set of canisters (labelled)	0	3	0
Salt-box and spice-drawers	0	2	6
Pestle and mortar	0	3	0
Cinder-sifter and large coal-shovel	0	3	6
Coal-pan and zinc pail	0	3	6
Self-basting roasting-pan	0	6	6
Cafetière and brown glazed teapot	0	4	6
Enamelled saucepans (granite ware) (three)	0	4	6
„ set of jugs (white enamel) and three basins	0	5	6
„ marmite for boiling meat	0	1	11
„ washing basins (two)	0	2	3
„ colander and fine strainer	0	2	6
Three-lip basins and three pudding-moulds (china)	0	2	9
Tin fish-kettle and deep tin steamer	0	5	6
Tin dustpans, hot-water cans, and jug	0	3	0
Paste-board and rolling-pin	0	2	6
Bread-pan with cover	0	2	3
Brown stone stew-pans (two)	0	2	6
Casserole and two shallow dishes	0	4	6
Double boiler (block-tin)	0	2	6
Small tools:			
Fruit and vegetable slicer	0	1	6
Three-fold grater	0	0	6
Dover egg-beater	0	0	6
Gravy-strainer	0	0	6

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT—*Continued.*

	£	s.	d.
Small tools—*continued:*			
Cook's knives (set of three)	0	2	3
Can-opener	0	0	6
Set of patty-pans	0	1	0
Set of baking-tins for bread or cake ...	0	2	6
Skewers	0	0	6
Set of pie-dishes	0	1	6
Fish-slice, kitchen spoons, and wooden spoons	0	3	0
Meat-chopper and saw	0	1	9
Knife-box and plate-basket	0	3	6
Sink-tidy	0	1	0
Corkscrew	0	0	6
Preserving-pan	0	5	6
Iron frying-pan	0	1	9
Ladle and gravy or basting spoon (iron) ...	0	1	6
Three flat-irons	0	2	6
Ironing-board for skirts and shirts	0	3	6
Housemaid's box	0	2	6
Banister-brush and hair whisk	0	3	6
Carpet brooms (hair and whisk)	0	5	6
Shoe, sink, and saucepan brushes	0	3	6
Polishing brushes and plate-leather	0	2	6
Window-leather	0	1	6
Set of mats for table protection	0	1	6
Housemaid's gloves (two pairs)	0	2	0
Wooden clothes-horse	0	4	2
Washing-tub	0	6	0
Total	9	16	6

The above list includes all the necessaries for a well-equipped kitchen, and nothing that is cumbersome, and any margin remaining over will allow for such additions as individual taste may suggest.

A washing-machine, with wringer and mangle complete, will cost from £6 to £10, according to size.

We now turn to our lists for the furnishing of the linen closet, and for the store of glass and china necessary for a small house, and then consider cutlery and plate.

The following list will be a reliable guide to the young housewife who is desirous of having a sufficiency of linen to last for some years, and the prices here given allow of having each article of sound quality:

	£	s.	d.
Two pairs of large blankets at 25s. per pair ...	2	10	0
Two pairs of small blankets at 20s. per pair ...	2	0	0
Three under blankets at 4s. each	0	12	0
Wadded quilt	0	15	0
Four pairs of large cotton sheets at 12s. 6d. per pair	2	10	0
Four pairs of small cotton sheets (single size) at 7s. 6d. per pair	1	10	0
Eight pillow-slips at 2s. and four bolster-cases at 2s.	1	4	0
Two pairs of servant's sheets at 4s. 6d. per pair	0	9	0
One pair of servant's blankets and under blanket	0	6	6
One Marsala quilt, two pillow-slips, and bolster-case	0	8	6

	£	s.	d.
Six best bath towels	0	8	6
Three large Turkish towels	0	10	0
Six huckaback and three diaper towels	0	8	6
Three roller towels	0	2	6
One dozen glass, one dozen rubbers, and one dozen dusters	0	12	0
Two large damask tablecloths (best)	1	4	0
Two small damask tablecloths	0	12	0
Two kitchen tablecloths	0	8	0
Two afternoon teacloths	0	10	6
Six best serviettes	0	6	6
Six ordinary serviettes	0	4	6
Total	17	12	0

Glass and China.

	£	s.	d.
One dozen each of cut-glass tumblers, port, and claret glasses ; six lemonade glasses, two decanters, two claret-jugs, two water-jugs, six flower-holders or tubes	2	2	0
Dinner-service for twelve persons	2	10	0
Tea-service for twelve persons	1	5	0
Breakfast service for six persons	0	10	6
Total	6	7	6

Silver and Cutlery.

	£	s.	d.
Six large ivory-handled table-knives, six small ivory-handled table-knives, meat-carver and fork, steel, six plated fruit-knives, six fish-knives and forks	2	15	6

SILVER AND CUTLERY—*Continued.*

	£	s.	d.
Six large forks, six small forks, six large spoons, six dessert-spoons, six tablespoons, six teaspoons, six afternoon teaspoons... ...	2	10	6
Two salt-spoons, one mustard-pot and spoon, soup-ladle, two sauce-ladles, fish-servers, butter-knife, sugar-tongs, four egg-spoons	1	10	6
Total	6	16	6

making the whole expenditure upon these different items—viz., linen, glass and china, silver and cutlery—£30 16s.

VI

THE DAY'S WORK

HAVING considered our income under its various divisions, and having established our home, in house, flat, or cottage, and furnished it according to our means, we reach the point when some practical hints regarding its upkeep may be of use to the housewife.

Just at first it will be all delightful because of its novelty, and because of the joy of possession, but by-and-by she may begin to ask whether it is possible to find in it a constant source of fresh interest, when month after month, and year after year, her life seems filled with a round of duties that tax her strength, that keep her tied to one place, and that never at any time are "done" completely, they are always having to be begun over again.

It is certainly true that, if she cannot find a never-ending source of interest in her work, it will inevitably tend to become drudgery; the problem is, what will make it interesting, and how is she to find in these duties something that shall cause her to turn with pleasure every morning to face

> "The sweet and necessary labours of the day"?

It must be granted that there are few occupations which have in them more possibilities for trying the health and temper and the patience of the worker, and yet it is just in proportion as she is able to keep her work "sweet" that she makes it healthful to do, also profitable.

To be successful as a housekeeper one must serve an apprenticeship to the business, as surely as one must learn a trade or study a profession. As we have said before, the necessary knowledge does not come to anyone by instinct, any more than the necessary wisdom for rearing an infant comes to the mother with its birth. We have erred too often in saying that such learning and such knowledge will be a matter of intuition when the position makes it necessary. Slowly, all too slowly, the world is beginning to understand that training for home life is just as necessary as training for business life; and all over the country there are groups of earnest students gathered together learning the business of home-keeping, so that they may carry their knowledge into other centres—their own homes, perhaps, when these are formed, or those of other people. In these training homes girls and women learn the practical duties of housekeeping in every detail, and add to that the work of the nursery, the garden, and all kinds of needlecraft, so that when they leave they are fully equipped for their life-service. Unhappily, it is not possible for every woman at the beginning of life to obtain such training; the possession of high ideals will, however, encourage her to train herself by some means, for high ideals carry far those who share them. The ideals of home-making are the same for all, whether the home they beautify is mansion or cottage. But ideals are spirit, and practical work is the body in which the spirit must dwell, so that neither can be sufficient alone.

There is one possession, however, on which every true woman may pride herself, and that is in having a peculiar gift for home-making. This gift is not in man, and man alone can never make a home, but woman alone can still do it. It is that indescribable something whereat "the housetop rejoices and is glad"—an influence and a charm pre-eminently and essentially feminine.

But is it not just a little hard on women, especially on those who pass their days in small houses, with many duties which in themselves are disagreeable, even sordid, that, being expected to do all these, she should also be required to remain dainty, sweet-natured, even "charming"? Man, in spite of his greater strength, cannot bear the sight of disorderly or sordid things; he wants his home to be always a place of rest, peace, and comfort. Surely there is some injustice in this? It might be so were it not that it is just another of those seeming inconsistencies which only women can reconcile! Thank heaven, they can and do show ability to reconcile them! Only *how* is it done?

First—and most easily, of course—by learning the best way of doing everything in those ideal training-homes, or in her girlhood's home, or, failing any such opportunity, in her own home, by slow and more painful steps. Love is her helper, but experience is her real teacher—and sometimes the fees are very high! It is when dirt and dust have taken off the freshness of the new possessions, when the daily round of meals becomes exacting, and breakages have marred the perfectness of the precious belongings, when the glamourie is on the wane, and reality is apt to look a little unattractive, that the time is ripe for bringing in every thought that adds interest, finding in the work its greater possibilities, and acknowledging its imperative importance.

A word of encouragement from a friend at this stage will work wonders, especially if it is a word that gives her confidence in her own capabilities. But whether the encouragement is given or not, let the wife face her position and settle it with herself. Her work of housekeeping is, for her, the most important work she can do; it takes its part in the work of the world. Her home is her world; let her fill it as full as ever she can, and not belittle it by thinking that anyone else could fill it just as well, while she did something else!

The day's work of any ordinary household would confound even a well-trained man of business, if he had as little help in its doing, and as few tools to work with as the average woman owns! When she is a good organizer, she soon learns not to waste words or to allow preventable hindrances to block her way, and does not let her weak spots become more visible than she can help! To study to be quiet, to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, is the first law in successful housekeeping.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle in arranging housework is the real difficulty there is of keeping to a fixed rule or system. This is not an imaginary difficulty, it is really there, as much so in the best regulated households as in the unsystematic ones. The most carefully-laid plans may be overturned at a moment's notice, and the admirably arranged routine must give way to the occurrence of the moment. A soft voice may well be "an excellent thing in a woman," for the provocation to raise it will beset her many times and oft! Self-control is, all the same, the first essential step necessary to obtaining control and government of her world.

But if routine cannot and need not be arbitrarily fixed, each day's work may be mapped out in clear outline, and the intention kept to, as far as by good generalship it possibly can be. This planning is equally necessary whether she be at the head of several servants or whether she depends on her own pair of hands alone. It is well also to have a few stringent rules to which everyone should be expected to conform; one of these should be punctuality at meals, and another the demand that everyone shall open his or her bedroom window each morning before leaving their room. It would not be too exacting if this demand went so far as to require each one to throw open their beds also, for this little help does a great deal to lighten work later on, and is something towards the maintenance of the health of the household. No one, not even a servant, should be expected to go into another's bedroom before it has been aired to some degree, for this one thing alone has been productive of much avoidable ill-health amongst working girls, and it is not only a thoughtless but an uncleanly practice to require it of them. As all bedclothes, even those belonging to the most cleanly person, need a thorough airing every day to keep them sweet, the earlier in the day they have this opportunity given them, the greater is the saving of time effected. A very busy housekeeper is often greatly tempted to make up her beds "straight off," to avoid having to return to the rooms again; but it is unwise to do it, and by a little rule of this kind she may be spared the temptation.

The making of the kitchen fire is usually the first thing to be done on arriving downstairs, unless a fire can be dispensed with altogether and breakfast cooked on the gas-cooker. Should a fire be required in winter for warmth, if the kitchen has not been used late in the evening the fire can be laid overnight, and will require but a match to set it alight. Where this has been done, the kettles filled, and the porridge cooked ready for reheating—

and with a double boiler this will have been the best plan to follow, for it is more wholesome than when hastily made — there will only be the table to set and lighter dishes to cook in the morning. In winter-time, when mornings are dark, if breakfast is to be a comfortable meal, this thinking and preparing beforehand is absolutely essential. An uncomfortable breakfast, hurriedly eaten, is the worst of all beginnings for a day of work.

Where one or more fires must be laid in the early morning, a housemaid's box, with all the necessaries therefor, should be put in readiness, and a pair of gloves included, so that by slipping these on and a big apron, the work is done without trouble and with the least amount of labour. A light dusting and freshening should be given the room in which breakfast is to be eaten, if nothing more, for dust and stale air will spoil anyone's appetite, no matter how tempting the food itself may be. To open windows and let in some of the morning air should be the duty of the first one downstairs, and even on a winter's morning a breath should blow through, if only for a few moments.

While breakfast is being eaten, water can be heating ready for washing-up, and this duty should be begun directly the table can be cleared. Nor is it one to dread, if you are provided with plenty of hot water, suitable cloths, and a little mop. The latter will save the necessity of putting the hands into hot water, and the hotter this is the better will it be for your work. Wash glass first in hot water, then rinse in cold, paying no heed to the notion that hot water will make glass "tender." It might soak for a year without becoming tender, and streaky or cloudy glass is a disgrace. But avoid putting tumblers in bottom downwards; slip them round between finger and thumb sideways, then wipe at once without draining, using their own soft and special cloths. Wash the cups and saucers next, with tea-plates, then the silver and plated goods, wiping all without draining; afterwards attack the bigger dishes, and drain these on a sloping board, but do not allow a great pile to accumulate before beginning to dry. Greasy plates may be made less disagreeable to wash if the grease is first taken off with a little soft paper and this is burnt; saucepans and tins that have been at all burnt, or that have some of their contents left adhering to bottom or sides, should have been filled up at once with cold water. If this soaking has not made them easy to clean, they may be filled again and set on the fire with a little soda to dissolve in them. White enamelled pans which have become discoloured by frequent using may have their whiteness restored by boiling in them a small piece of lime. Cooking utensils ought to be kept as sweet and clean as the dainty china, and may be so, where hot water is plentifully used and the right tools and cleansers are brought into service. In washing knives, do not let the handles touch water, as this turns them yellow. A piece of monkey soap or sapolio will remove the worst stains from them, and the knife-machine will polish them until they are like new. Use a brush and sand to saucepans, or a little sapolio for the white inside, and if smoke has blackened the outside let that be removed with paper before washing. To keep tins scoured as they are used is far better than to let burnt stains dry on them and then have to boil and scour them with great labour at some future time. Dry all wet cloths and dish-towels in the open air, if possible, and do not use any of them too often, as otherwise you will have the odour of dried-in dish-water left on your plates. On washing days these cloths need a thorough boiling.

A kitchen table should not require washing or scrubbing every day, for clean papers can be laid over it when cooking is in progress, and straw mats on which to stand pans will save many a mark and stain. Sheets of paper may be laid down on the floor to save the boards or linoleum from becoming spotted. It is, indeed, wonderful how much sweeping and scrubbing may be saved by the judicious use of a few newspapers. Where newspapers are objected to for the table, a piece of thin oilcloth will perhaps be better, especially where water is likely to be spilled.

Leave the kitchen straight and tidy, with everything restored to its place, before going elsewhere. If anything has to be arranged for a meal which will require long cooking, it should be seen to before the kitchen is left, and at any rate the larder should have been looked through and scraps brought together before the dishes were washed, in order that all the plates might be cleared of their contents. The plans for meals, if not already laid, should be worked out in the mind while the hands are occupied with these more mechanical things.

Take up a can of hot water with salt or soda when going to do the washstands upstairs, so that all pitchers and vessels may be well rinsed out from day to day. The cloths that are used for wiping these should be washed out when done with, and never used for anything else. Turn mattresses over daily when making up the beds, then dust each room, filling up water jugs and bottles, and arrange the blinds and curtains so that they will be right for the day. It is not needful to keep windows wide open all day; much dust and dirt will accumulate if you do so, and where there has been a good airing for the first thing in the morning, they can be nearly closed afterwards, leaving just enough space to allow air to circulate steadily. Just before the rooms are used at night a good blow through for a short time will make them fresh again, unless a fire has been lit, and this becomes the ventilator.

Passages and stairs should be dusted down rather than swept often, as much sweeping only creates more dust. The same rule applies to living-rooms; it is better to sweep with a hand-brush where footmarks are seen, or use a damp cloth, leaving the thorough sweeping to the time when it can be properly done. Avoid making dirt before you remove it. Careful dusting will be better for your furniture than too much energetic cleaning. On cleaning days, where the work is done systematically, it undergoes a process of purification that may and should last.

In the daily order you would, after setting the upper and lower rooms straight for the day, come back to the kitchen and continue the cooking. When a maid has been doing the heavier part of the foregoing duties, and the mistress the lighter work, both will be free for the kitchen work also. The maid can then prepare vegetables and receive direction with regard to the further cooking of the midday meal; and if she has not to do anything more in connection with this, she will have other duties, a few for each day, in polishing, cleaning, washing, ironing, or other work. The laying of the table and serving of the midday meal should finish the morning's work for both mistress and maid, except on such days as elaborate cleaning has to be done. After this meal and the washing-up that follows, there should be an interval of quiet for both workers; the maid may dress and sit down to sew or read, and the mistress the same, or she will take her exercise out of doors, perhaps, or her quiet read indoors. It is bad economy not to have this break in the day's work, but it is not good economy to use it for merely lying down and going to sleep. This ought not to be needful for those who sleep well at night, even if they are early risers. But the habit grows if it is indulged in, and instead of resting, it often makes anyone more weary. Truer rest is found by changing the occupation, and especially by changing the line of thought. An hour of good reading, a brisk walk out of doors, or a visit to a friend, are all more refreshing than an hour that is spent in lying down on a couch. Let those who are sceptical try both plans, and then judge for themselves.

VII

THE CARE OF LINEN AND THE HOUSEHOLD LAUNDRY

In our furnishing estimates we allowed for a purchase of linen sufficient to stock well a house of moderate size; if a less quantity had perforce to be purchased, it was said additions would require to be made nearly every year in order to keep up the supply; if the full amount allowed for in the list could be obtained at the first, replenishing the stock every few years would probably suffice, unless the wear was hard indeed.

But linen will wear out much faster than furniture, and it is most economical to add a few things year by year, usually at the season of the "white sales," which generally take place in February; in olden days it was the custom to give the month of February to the overhauling of all household goods. This is a good time of the year for making over both winter and summer goods, and there will be sheets that will require turning "from sides to middle," re-hemming, or remaking; perhaps new pillow or bolster cases will be required; towels will want new hems or to be cut down to other uses, replacing some with new, and taking those which have been best for commoner use, and so on. It will be the same with table-cloths and serviettes, although not, we hope, until they have seen a few years of wear. But when linen is thoroughly overhauled and repaired once a year, there is seldom need to trouble much about it for the rest of that year. Still, laundries are destructive, and it is wonderful how much work they *can* provide for the needlewoman's fingers!

It is not a good plan to wear sheets longer than a fortnight, even on a single bed, for although they may seem but little soiled, they are apt to acquire, in course of time, a yellow tinge in places, and these places will wear thin and rotten while the rest of the sheet remains good. They should be turned and used on both sides, but not from top to bottom, or *vice versâ*. Pillow-slips should be changed with the sheets, or, if required, once a week, but bolster-cases may wear rather longer. Face towels should be changed twice a week, and bath towels once. This may seem extravagant to some people, but where the washing is done at home it really lightens labour and reduces the wear of the articles themselves. Every person in a household should have their own towels kept strictly to their own use. This is one of the elementary rules of hygiene.

When buying linen for a small house, do not be led away by the superior attractions of hemstitched sheets and frilled pillow-slips, but remember that if these seem low in price, quality must have been sacrificed to appearance. Plain goods, but the best of their kind, as far as means allow, will last twice as long as more showy things. Linen sheets are but little used in these days, for although they may wear longer than cotton ones, they are more costly, and in our variable climate are apt to be too cold for a great part of the year. Moreover, in lying by, unused linen sheets are liable to turn yellow; the best way to keep their colour is to turn them out periodically and spread them on the grass in the sunshine, pouring clear water over them at intervals: the sun is the best bleaching agent yet discovered.

Many people are adopting woollen sheets, made in fine unbleached wool; these are so smooth and fine and thin that there is not the slightest friction with them, and certainly they are extremely cosy for cold weather; they are also healthful, and make less washing, as they do not absorb the exhalations of the body as cotton does, and if well aired each day a pair may be used for a month. The best of these are made by the Jaeger manufacturers, but they are rather high in price. This sheeting can be bought by the yard, and if the first outlay is somewhat costly, it certainly wears for years, and for the use of old people and children is excellent. Young and delicate children will sleep far more comfortably in woollen sheets, and do with a smaller amount of outer covering.

Damask table linen is the best wear always, but only the superior cloths need be of double damask. The serviettes need not be bought to match the cloths, but rather by the dozen, all of one pattern, so that they are easily replaced; a good bargain may sometimes be made in buying old stock—that is, remnants of sets. As fruit and wine stains are the most destructive enemies of serviettes, when serving fruit at dessert use should be made of the dainty Japanese paper ones; boxes of six dozen of these can be bought for a shilling. By careful folding and keeping under a weight a tablecloth may be made to wear a fortnight instead of a week. In large houses where the table linen is highly polished, it is not removed from the dining-table more than once a day, but slip cloths are used for other meals. Small slip cloths, to place at the carver's end, are, indeed, a great saving. A tumbled table-cloth, stained and creased, will mar the appearance of the best meal that ever was cooked.

Buy each kind of kitchen cloth of a distinctive pattern, with some mark that shall give no excuse for using it for other than its own purpose. Some have the word "Kitchen" woven in, others "Glass," or "Tea," and so on. There are sets for lavatories and for the bath. Dusters can be assorted in a similar way. Half a dozen of each kind will keep a small house well supplied if replenished from time to time. A good roller-towel is needed for kitchen use.

All linen should be marked plainly, if possible by worked letters in ingrain cotton. If things go out to a laundry there will probably be another mark put upon them as well, which is sometimes an annoyance. Still, this should be permitted if it prevents loss.

We now come to study the process of washing linen, or the home laundry.

Where there is a fairly open piece of ground, and the atmosphere is clear, it is a pity not to attempt at least a part of the family washing at home, even if the fine ironing has to be put out. The advantages of home washing are many: not only do the clothes wear longer, but there is the satisfaction of knowing they are not washed and boiled with others in indiscriminate fashion, also the certainty of having them dried in the open air. The work need not be so laborious as at first sight it sounds, especially if a Bradford Washer has been included in the household plenishings. Where a washing-machine cannot be afforded, a small wringer should be considered a necessity, as this, again, serves for a mangle, and so lightens the work of ironing. Sheets never need more than to be twice mangled, and tablecloths that have gone through the rollers will only need polishing with a hot-iron to bring up the gloss. It is the wringing which proves the most trying part of washing, and if not well done, the clothes are apt to look streaked. Thorough rinsing in at least two waters and thorough wringing, then shaking out and hanging straight on the lines, are an indispensable part of good washing.

The day before washing-day the clothes should be sorted, soap should be melted (for a washing-machine), and starch made in readiness. Some of the clothes can also be put in soak with great advantage. Forethought of this kind will shorten the labour and time occupied when the work actually begins. Where there is no machine, and where the washing has all to be done by hand, in small house or flat, there may be much labour saved by using the Fels-Naphtha soap exactly according to the directions given on the wrapper, only, instead of letting the soaped clothes lie for the half-hour or so that is stated, sheets and body-linen can, with much advantage, be left overnight, and then merely want light rubbing and thorough rinsing to make them perfectly clean and white without any boiling. This is really the least laborious method of washing that could be devised, and certainly the clothes keep a good colour and last long when it is followed. A modest friend of the writer's, who lives in a very modest flat, executes all her washing after this method, and it is a puzzle to everyone how she gets it out of hand so quickly without scent of suds or steam.

Where the ordinary plan is followed with or without a machine, the copper fire should be lit the first thing in the morning, the copper itself having been filled overnight. The water is then heating while other duties are seen to, and the first lot can be got through and put out of doors before much housework requires to be done. Start with the cleanest and largest things, such as table linen and sheets, so that these can be out and drying while others which need rubbing and longer boiling are in progress. Put cold water with the clothes that go into the copper, with such soap and powder as is thought necessary, and bring the water slowly to a boil. It is gradual heating that draws out the dirt, not the time of actual boiling. A very short time of boiling is sufficient for most things, except kitchen cloths, which need longer. Lift from the copper on to a wash-board to drain, then throw into clear cold water, rinsing them thoroughly ; wring out of this, and throw white things into fresh water that has been slightly blued. From this they are wrung out thoroughly and quickly, and well dried. Galvanized wire lines are better than cords, as they do not rust, and need but to be rubbed over before using, whereas cords are liable to leave their mark.

Fruit stains and those from tea or coffee are best removed before washing by holding the stained part over a basin and pouring hot water over it until the stain disappears ; for ink stains use milk and water, and let them lie in it for a time. Stains from machine oil should be rubbed with lard first, then washed in strong soapsuds. For iron-mould spread the garment in the sunshine and pour water over it several times. In bright sunshine the spots should disappear in a few hours, but if not, touch the spots with salts of lemon, rinse, and put out again. Marks made by scorching with a hot-iron will vanish if exposed to the sun in the same way.

A spoonful of powdered borax in a pailful of water will soften it far better than soda, and will help to whiten the clothes. One or two spoonfuls of liquid ammonia should be added to each pail of water when woollens are washed, and to the lather used for blankets. Wash Jaeger garments according to the directions given in the Jaeger book of instructions. Wash stockings in clean soapy water, and do not mix them with other things; turn each one and wash a second time, then rinse thoroughly in clear warm water, and shake very thoroughly before hanging out to dry.

Starch is used either raw or boiled; if the latter, it is first mixed to a smooth paste with sufficient cold water, then sufficient boiling water is poured in to make it thick and transparent. A piece of white wax or small piece of pure lard is stirred into this, the reason of this being to prevent the iron from sticking. Whatever is dipped into boiled starch should be quickly dipped into clear hot water afterwards, then wrung out and dried in the air. When dry, the clothes should be thoroughly damped again and rolled tightly. After lying thus for an hour or two they will be ready to iron.

For cold starch take about two handfuls to a pint of cold water. Whatever is dipped into this will also need rinsing in clear warm water afterwards ; then, instead of hanging out to dry, lay each article on a clean cloth or towel, and roll up tightly, leaving them for some time before attempting to iron.

Keep irons smooth by regular polishing with bath-brick, and rub each one on a piece of brown paper first, then wipe with a dry cloth.

All clothes after drying require sprinkling and folding, and they should lie thus for a few hours, if possible. Sheets and table-cloths should be shaken out by two persons together, then straightly folded, and after mangling or ironing they should again hang out in the open air or in a drying-room for several hours, to insure their thorough airing. The matter of careful folding, so important to the look of the linen, is often disregarded by even the best laundries, and sheets are sent home with creases that utterly disfigure them. Coloured clothes should be dried before they are starched, then dried again and damped, and put under press before ironing. A little salt or vinegar in the rinse-water will freshen the colour of such things. A spoonful of spirits of wine should be added to the water in which thin silks or mercerized lawns are rinsed, as this gives back their original gloss. These things are better not to dry in the air, but merely to be folded between clean cloths and left until they can be ironed.

A skirt-board, and a board to put under shirt bosoms are both necessary where there is much washing and ironing done at home. The first-named is almost indispensable where there are petticoats to iron, and the latter absolutely so for shirt-fronts. Both these require covering with two thicknesses of old blanket or flannel, then with a piece of sheeting, the last to be properly sewn in position. A folded blanket-strip and an old sheet folded over make a good cover for the ironing-table. The modern and model kitchen is fitted with a trestle-table that folds up and can be put away when done with, and is kept for this use alone. Sometimes this is made to fit into a shallow cupboard against the wall, and little shelves at the side accommodate the irons and other tools used, so that all are put away and kept dry until required again.

Examine all clothes as soon as they come in from a laundry and air them over again, however dry they may feel; this is the opportunity for repairing and adding buttons, etc., and the time for detecting faulty work.

VIII

THE ART OF CLEANING

A careful and thorough cleaning at stated intervals is needful for every room in house or flat; it need not be given very frequently where the wear and tear is light, but in most families it becomes necessary to have a good turn-out once a week. As in every other kind of work, there is a right and a wrong way of going about this, and as the right way invariably proves the quickest way in the end, it is well to adopt it. Our aim is the genuine and complete removal of dust and dirt, not its scattering abroad, else it will find new lodgment in other places. Most servants need guidance and direction in the matter of cleaning a room, although they may have been used to the work for years, for it should be remembered that hardly ever do they find two mistresses adopting the same methods, and certainly each mistress will deem her own method the best one! The charwoman who has worked according to her own light for years will be apt to resent much direction or interference, and it will need tact to deal with her; where her result is good, she may generally be allowed to go about obtaining it in her own way. Both charwoman and maid, however, are apt to work with more vigour than skill, and it is the mistress's part to supply the brains and the guidance, rather than to work with her own hands. There may be an unnecessary expenditure both of labour and time, and it is to avoid this that the mistress makes her plans and settles her methods. The work of cleaning house is noble work when rightly performed, for it is essential to health and well-being, but almost more than any other does it call for organization.

Those who understand sanitary laws know that in addition to careful periodical cleansing it is needful also to give a more exhaustive cleaning once or twice a year. The house requires its Passover. By keeping this, the accumulation of dirt in unsuspected corners, under carpets, on walls and cornices, is prevented, and despite all our thoroughness *some* dirt will gather in these out-of-the-way places in the course of months.

Dust and fluff, in living and sleeping rooms, are caused partly by the dirt that we gather in our going about in house and street, and partly by the friction of clothing and bed-linen ; this is the lightest form of inevitable dirt, and to deal with it is a comparatively easy matter. If skirts and clothing were shaken out of doors before entering the house, and at all events taken out to be so shaken and cleaned once a week, much of this dust would be avoided.

The kinds of dirt that are more difficult to deal with are smoke-grime and fire-dust, ashes, waste, and general refuse. Part of this we must gather together for clearing away by the town authorities, but part we must remove and consume. Most vegetable refuse can be burnt where there is a kitchen range, and waste paper should find its end by burning also, unless it can be sold. Smoke-grime on paint and walls can in the one case be cleaned off with a soft cloth wrung out of soap-suds, and in the other by a piece of stale bread or a lump of baker's dough. Good wall-papers can be preserved clean for a long time by going over them once or twice a year with either bread or dough. A disinfectant should be used in the water wherewith floors and woodwork of skirting-boards are washed, so that in sinking into the spaces between the boards it really destroys any germs that might be hidden in the dust. Polished woodwork should be painted over with turpentine, letting this penetrate into all the interstices, to kill any insects or moths that may be in hiding.

Lime-washing of pantries and closets should be done regularly, and as regularly—but more frequently—the drains should all be flushed clear, a disinfectant, (either carbolic or a solution of permanganate of potash, or Sanitas), being used. All bath plugs and taps need watchful examination from time to time to prevent brush hairs and bits of sponge from clogging them. Where mice have been troublesome and persistent in closet or cupboard, it is a good plan to clear everything out, and to set alight a little broken sulphur that is spread on an old tin, leaving the fumes to penetrate into all holes and crevices, tightly closing up doors and windows. This is also one of the simplest and safest ways of disinfecting a room after illness. Nothing liable to tarnish should be left in the room where sulphur is burnt, but clothing and bedding will not harm, and will be rendered purer for this fumigation ; opening the windows and leaving the room exposed to the air for several hours will effectually remove all disagreeable odour.

Where coals are going to be laid in, chimneys swept, or plumbing repairs effected, these should be attended to before any actual cleaning begins, although room for all these operations has to be made by removal of furniture and taking up of carpets, etc.

Clean all furniture by thorough brushing and wiping before wrapping each piece in a dust-sheet or in papers. Further washing and polishing will be done when we come to dust and finish, but all removable dirt should be taken off in the beginning.

Where there is no open field-space near at hand it is far better to send carpets and rugs away to the steam works to insure the dust being taken out. They can also be cleaned at the same time, if this seems desirable; the charges for doing so are calculated by the foot. Send stair-carpets also—it is the cheapest process in the end. Chinese matting can be lightly beaten, then washed with clear water and borax. Carpets and rugs can be washed after they have been relaid with the Chiswick carpet soaps, and will look like new after the process. Curtains will need very thorough shaking, then may be laid over a table and brushed, and sometimes a little clear water with weak solution of ammonia will improve their appearance and take off the dirt, applying it with brush or sponge. Let serge or tapestry curtains be thoroughly dry and clean before folding and putting them away, and wrap each one in sheets of newspaper. There is nothing keeps moths away better than printer's ink. A camphor-bag can also be put into the drawer or closet with them. It is upon stained or soiled places that moths first begin their work.

Varnished paint should be washed with clear water in which a spoonful of paraffin has been stirred, and varnished walls with the same, using soft cloths for the purpose—one to wash with, and one to dry with. Nothing makes better cloths than old under-vests and pants. Ordinary paint that does not come clean with simple soap and water may have a little sapolio rubbed on the cloth and applied, then rinsed off and dried. A little fine whitening is the best thing to sprinkle on a damp cloth for the cleaning of dirty window-panes and mirrors, then rub them with a dry leather; and for the ordinary polishing of windows nothing is better to use than old newspapers. Oil pictures should be wiped over with a damp chamois leather, and gilt picture-frames should be brushed with a camel-hair brush dipped in water in which an onion-skin has been boiled.

Boiled linseed-oil mixed with turpentine is the polishing mixture used by cabinet-makers for all kinds of polished woods, and it benefits such not merely by cleansing, but by actual feeding. It should not be applied to unvarnished woods unless such have also been oiled. This does not give a high polish; therefore, if this is required, a little ordinary beeswax and turpentine paste can be applied afterwards. If the woodwork of chairs and other pieces of furniture have dust in the crevices, this can be washed out by using a soft brush or piece of rag dipped in vinegar and water; then, after drying well, apply the oil or other polishing material. If there is dark-stained oak furniture, much carved, to clean, it will require a stiff brush for the purpose, and a mixture of boiled linseed-oil and alkanet root is generally applied. Much care is needed to cleanse all the carving from dust.

Lacquered brass should not be polished in the ordinary way, but it may be rubbed with furniture polish occasionally. Unless you have a metal polish that is most trustworthy, simple precipitated chalk or ordinary whitening will be better for such ornaments as are made of pewter, brass, copper, or silver. To polish with this will keep them from tarnishing for a long time.

Wash all china ornaments and bowls in which plants usually stand; also bedroom candlesticks, and crockery that is rarely used.

Of course, all this cleansing need not be given at once, and where but little extra help can be afforded, it is well to do a few things at regular intervals, and, prior to actual cleaning, to turn out the different closets, clean certain articles, and polish others, putting them away until all the rest have been done and the time has come for finishing off the whole room.

Outside doors, the front door and panelling, also painted iron railings, can be cleaned with cloths wrung out of water in which a good deal of paraffin has been put, or with a cloth dipped in paraffin itself. This removes dust and fly-marks, and prevents paint from blistering in hot sunshine. Where the front door is of polished wood, the paraffin treatment must be followed by a rubbing with beeswax and turpentine.

Pine panelling that has been enamelled white will only need washing with soap and water, using a fine brush for the grooves. Soda must never be used for white paint. Lincrusta and anaglypta can also be washed, the surfaces being first carefully brushed with soft brushes, and leather papers or dados will generally be well cleaned by simple brushing and dry rubbing. Parquet floors should be cleansed with turpentine, then waxed and polished. Never wash stained, varnished, or oiled floors.

Leather-covered furniture, if very dirty, can be cleaned with a little warm water and soap, using a flannel, then rubbed dry with clean cloth. The gloss is restored by rubbing over the surface with white of egg applied with a soft cloth; the leather on writing-tables can also be restored in the same way.

Clean basket and wicker chairs with paraffin and water after removing the cushions and beating them, then leave them out of doors for the smell to be carried away.

Where steel fireirons have become rusted they are very difficult to clean, but a mixture of paraffin and emery-powder will remove the rust, if allowed to remain on a short time, followed by a vigorous rubbing. When cleaned and polished, rub the surfaces over with a paste made of fresh lime and water, and, when dry, polish again. This will keep out rust for months.

In cleaning brass candlesticks and things not in regular use, they should be washed first, using sapolio as well as a little soft soap. Dry them with soft cloths, then polish with a leather dipped in finely-powdered bathbrick, and finally with the leather only. If stains are not removed by the bathbrick alone, mix this to a paste with paraffin.

Where marble is only stained on the surface it will generally come quite clean with a rubbing of Monkey soap or Vim, and by washing with warm soapy water; but if the stains are of long date they may not yield to this treatment. A good mixture to prepare and leave on the marble until dry is made by powdering together a small handful of washing soda, an ounce of precipitated chalk, and an ounce of powdered pumice-stone. Make into a cream with boiling water, then lay over the marble in a thick paste, and leave for several hours. Seccotine will mend artificial marble, especially light ornaments which have suffered damage; but heavier tops and slabs will need joining together with a mixture of plaster of Paris and warm water—this very quickly becomes hard.

Japanned trays and papier-maché goods should be washed with warm soap and water, then dried thoroughly, and finally polished by sprinkling dry flour over them and rubbing with soft silk handkerchief or duster.

Ivory ornaments that have become yellow should be washed and set in the sunshine, keeping them wet for some hours. If still stained, try washing with lemon-juice or nitric acid diluted with water.

Wash toilet brushes with hot water in which borax has been dissolved, or to which a little ammonia is added, then rinse in cool water and dry them in the open air, the backs uppermost. Polish the backs of wooden brushes with a dry cloth, or of silver ones with whitening and a leather, or of ivory ones with leather also. Tooth and nail brushes should stand in water conatining Sanitas for a short time weekly, then be rinsed and dried in the open air. Sponges need careful attention from time to time to prevent them getting greasy; when they show signs of doing so, let them lie in hot water with a good handful of common salt for an hour, then rinse through several clear waters.

When all the extra cleaning has been done, give the household brushes and brooms their turn of cleansing in soap and water; polish dust-pans and clean out pails; thoroughly wash and rinse all polishing cloths and leathers, shaking them well, and leave them to dry out of doors. Then restore all to place, and know that

> "Everything washable has been washed its whitest,
> Everything polishable polished its brightest,"

and let your housekeeping conscience rest in peace for some time to come. The sense of freshness and purity everywhere will be your reward.

IX

TRAINING A SERVANT

THE maid who is employed to help with the work of a small house, under the administration of a small income, will almost inevitably be a young one, needing much training and much patient teaching. It will be well here to pause, and give in brief outline a few of the points that are most necessary to bear in mind in such a situation, and the same remark will apply with but slight differences to the larger household, where two or more maids are kept. As we are not dealing with households where expert service can be expected, we shall not divide the duties of a house-parlourmaid, cook, or manservant, and need not consider the etiquette which prevails in the class of life to which such belong; but we shall regard all these duties as being fulfilled in the person of the one who is called "general," or, as the French more euphoniously phrase it, the *bonne à tout faire*.

There is no need in these days for "Greasy

Joan" to "keel the pot," for the black iron pot has vanished from our modern kitchens, and Joan need no longer be greasy, save of *malice prépense.* With labour-savers for the maid as well as for the mistress, with kitchen work made cleanly and easy, and convenient cooking-stoves, tiled hearths, and covered floors, Joan may, if she will, keep herself clean to the point of daintiness. If she be a very young Joan, taken straight from school, her mistress should make personal cleanliness, and clean ways of working, her first care and demand. A little strictness on this head, a watchfulness that slurs over no single thing, during the first weeks, will make all the after-time easier; it will be appreciated by Joan herself more than too great leniency. She will be judging her mistress and unconsciously copying her every day, learning more by example than by precept. By taking pains and using patience in the beginning much worry and tedium is saved later on. The writer has, in a few weeks' time, trained a young girl who came straight from school, to become an expert waitress, and to lay a dinner-table correctly and with precision, and to understand an order, or a want, by a look, without a word being spoken.

One of the most difficult, and one of the first things to teach a raw recruit, is the right way of answering the door. A nice manner is natural to some girls, and with others it seems as if it never could be acquired; they will be awkward and ungainly after years of service. But in the small house or the large one this duty is one of the most important of all that fall to the lot of the maid.

If she be engaged in doing dirty work and the bell rings, the maid may lawfully take a few moments in order to wash her hands and change her apron for a clean one; if callers come at unusual times they must expect to wait a little. But if they come at reasonable times, at such times as a maid ought to be able to answer the door immediately, yet is not so, she is blamable if she keeps them waiting; it is possible to have a clean apron on underneath the rough outside one, and to be otherwise prepared for a sudden summons. One may forgive a maid having dirty hands, if her face is clean and her hair tidy, and her dress neat.

When she opens the door, teach her to open it wide and to face the visitor fully—not to peep round the edge, as if resenting an intrusion. To a lady her answer to the question of whether her mistress is at home or not should be, "Yes, ma'am," or, "No, ma'am," as the case may be, and to a gentleman, "Sir." If she has to leave visitors in order to make an inquiry, she should ask them to stand inside the door, and close it behind them if she can do no more, but she should never leave them standing outside a half-opened door. If the visitors are shown into the parlour, coat or wrap and umbrellas should be taken by the maid; then opening the door for them, she will step inside first and announce the names, then stand aside to let them in, and quietly close the door after them. When the bell is rung, as a sign that the visitors are going, she will be in the hall in readiness to give back the wraps and umbrellas, to open the hall door and to close it; or if a cab or carriage is in waiting she will go forward and open its door, put in the wraps, and close it after they are inside, then go back and stand at the door until it has driven off. The hall door should never be closed while the visitor is near to it. Such manners, it will be seen, are not mere formalities, but they are founded on a kindly hospitality and friendliness, and they are equally as applicable to the tiniest house as to the mansion. A brusque manner seeming to imply that the visitor is unwelcome, and a hasty closing of the door, as if to say you are glad they are gone," shows ignorance and ill-breeding.

Shall we not rather put it in the words of the Japanese, who, in teaching good manners to children, tell them that to be awkward and ungraceful is "to have no mind in the little finger"? No people are so charming in manner, and none think more about the importance of good behaviour than they, and it is one of the lessons, out of many, which they have to teach the older Western nations. Good behaviour is taught to the children in the schools from their earliest years, but it is with the intent of giving them self-control and self-possession, and these qualities are indeed essential for success in after-life, let the position of man or woman be what it may.

In the work of waiting at table, which is another most important duty, the young maid will need much patient teaching, but let the aim be to have this done quietly, deftly, and thoughtfully. Teach her to keep her mind on her work, not to be listening to the talk, and to look after the comfort and needs of those she serves—not merely to do the necessary handing and clearing away of dishes. Teach her also to prepare the next course directly she has served one, so that no prolonged waiting or clattering of plates will occur. Teach her that waiting at table is beautiful work when rightly performed, that it is one of the highest branches of her profession, and to be skilled in doing that is to be qualified to earn very good pay wherever she is placed.

"I am among you as one that serveth." Let it be understood that service is a *function*, not that it is something done to please the *will* of another person, and do not degrade the work by making a parade of the fact that you have someone paid to perform it. Do not make one single unnecessary call, or require one single unnecessary step to be taken.

It is hardly needful here to go through the work of the house and give in detail the many duties that will fall to the lot of the maid, for where she is one alone, she will usually be the assistant of her mistress, sharing in all her work, but taking, we will hope, the heavier tasks. It is this working together that lightens drudgery for both. But in working together, do not fall into the mistake of treating your paid helper as an equal friend, for even if she were on the same social level, with the same education as yourself, she would not desire this, nor would she respect you the better for according it.

The modern, up-to-date housewife, who herself rejoices in the use of better tools and in finding better methods of work, will teach her maid to use these also, and they will together be helping to make housework progress as it ought, in a line with other progressions.

To illustrate this attitude, the writer takes the liberty of quoting part of a short sketch which appeared in a weekly paper not long ago, and which so clearly shows the influence that a wise mistress may have on the mind of her maid, and how far this influence may radiate. Truly, no one can say that any one woman's influence is limited to her home—certainly not if there is a maid to spread it abroad by her talk!

The writer of the sketch, Miss Lizzie Alldridge, begins by telling how she fell into conversation with the talkative young girl in the train. She was a sweet, fresh-faced young thing, and disposed to be friendly, so much so that her listener soon knew all about her.

"'I'm in a place—a situation, you know. . . . I'm sixteen, and it's my day out, so I'm going to see my parents. They live down by the docks. I like living down by the docks better than up here, and I used to cry at first, but I don't now. I like my place very much. . . .

Such a nice lady! . . . I've been there two months, and I get four-and-six a week—not bad for me! And it's the first time I've slept in, too—and me only sixteen! When I've been there a year I'm to be raised to five—that's one pound a month. Not bad for me!'

I at once began to think well of this girl's mistress; evidently she knew the value of a little encouragement in the matter of wages.

"'Very good indeed,' I said; 'and what do you call yourself—a general?'

"'Well, I suppose that is what I am; but there's a charwoman for the roughest work. And the lady is teaching me cooking.'

"'And does she cook well herself?'

"'Oh yes!' with conviction. 'And there's always good food, and so nice. She sees to all the cooking; but she's getting me into it. She taught me how to do the browned potatoes, and how to put the joint down properly. Oh, I'm getting on! She says she is pleased with me. But I have to get up ever so early, and I've learned how to get the breakfasts now. I stir the porridge, and boil the milk, and make the coffee, and cook the other things quite well now.'

I had a vision of this little thing getting up in the dark on these cold mornings, raking out the grates and lighting the fires all by herself, and I thought how dismal it must be.

"'What do you do the first thing?' I asked. 'Black the grates?'

"'Oh no,' she replied quickly, 'there are no grates to black. It's all gas! You just turn a tap, and there's a nice fire. And there are no lamps to fill either—all electric light.'

"'Why, here,' I said to myself, 'is a modern mistress who believes in saving labour.'

My interest in the mistress as well as the maid grew quickly.

"'And do you make the coffee? Tell me how you do that.'

The little maid at once described an up-to-date coffee-making machine that seemed delightfully clean and simple, and gave me the quantity of coffee used, repeating the whole process, as if she knew it by heart.

"'Excellent teacher,' I thought. 'Simple, precise, thorough in her instructions.'

The girl was unconsciously painting her mistress's portrait for me. She put in another touch that I thought quite charming.

"'She is teaching me to wait at table. She had some friends to dinner last week, and I waited. Before they came she said to me, "Don't be frightened; when you don't know what to do I will tell you." And she did; and when they were gone she gave me the loveliest orange. Oh, she *is* a nice lady!'

"'Thoughtful in little things,' was my unspoken comment. But aloud I said, 'You are a most fortunate girl.'

"'Yes, I know I'm a lucky girl,' she assented. 'And it must be a good place, because the last girl stayed two years—so it must be, mustn't it?'

"'Certainly; but I hope you'll stay four.'

"'I mean to, although I don't like the French nurse.' Then suddenly remembering another item, 'I have such a nice bedroom! There are two little beds in it—one for me, and one for Julie, that's the French nurse.'

"'I hope you are kind to Julie?' I said.

"'She wants waiting on as if she were a lady, and I know she isn't.'

Just before we parted she told me again that she meant to stay in spite of Julie, because it was such a nice place, and such a nice lady, and they were so kind to her.

As I went up the station steps I felt that I loved that little maid; and as for the image of the mistress she had called up before my mind—that clever, affectionate mistress, who knew so thoroughly how to win a girl's love and confidence, and how to turn that girl herself to the best account, making her both happy and useful—I quite longed to see her. What I should have enjoyed would have been to wander, invisibly, through that capable woman's house, for I was sure I should have found it in delightful order, and bright with constant kindness. And there, too, without committing larceny, I could have picked up many a household 'wrinkle.' I shall long preserve the portrait the little maid painted for me."

The above sketch shows that there is an even more potent factor than example at work in this labour of teaching a young servant. Example is stronger than precept or words, we all agree, but what is still stronger than example is *unconscious inspiration.*

The mistress who is herself skilled and clever will soon inspire her maid to become the same; for servants are like children, in that they imitate what they see as well as what they hear. It is useless to preach tidiness and order if the mistress leaves her boots lying in places where she may have thrown them off in haste, scatters her clothes about, leaves one task unfinished to begin another, and is lacking in delicacy in her own habits.

To merely live for a few weeks in the house of a dainty woman will train a young girl without much teaching by word of mouth, while to live with one who is thriftless and selfish will demoralize just as effectively. A good mistress's task is made difficult indeed when she takes in hand the tool that another woman has spoiled; and therefore, instead of regretting that she can only afford to employ a raw recruit, fresh from school, let a young housewife be glad if she have new material to shape and mould, and let her give to the work all the care, all the thought, all the patience she can summon to her aid, and her reward will be greater far than she can ever estimate, for her influence will spread wherever that girl may go, and it will make her future home a replica in spirit of that which she first knew.

Although the character of domestic service, and the estimation in which it is held, may change with the years, and the employé may be much less under the domination of the employer than was formerly thought fitting, yet this factor of personal influence never weakens wherever one individual is in any way bound to obey another. It is even more pronounced in foreign countries, where subservience is far less marked than in England, because servants look upon themselves as belonging to the family. English people who go abroad to live often feel it a severe trial that they are required to accept an altogether different class of service to that to which they have been accustomed. They are very apt to forget that they themselves may be weighed in the balances and found wanting by those whom they judge. A Tuscan householder writes: "To say that any foreign service ever arrives at the perfection and finish of the best English service would be absurd. The latter is one of the things that most impresses foreigners who visit England for the first time. . . . It is when you come to the lower order of English servants and compare them with Tuscans that you find the comparison is not altogether to the disadvantage of the latter. There is much refinement of nature in our Tuscans, and a very quick perception of what order their employers belong to. A Tuscan is rarely vulgar, and the most scathing criticism he can pass on his social superiors is to say of them that they are *senza educazione* (without education). By which he does not mean that the person in question is ignorant of the 'three r's,' but that he is deficient in those qualities of mind and character which, as we would put it, go to make up a 'gentleman' or 'lady.'"

We will now consider a few of the rules and principles that have reference to the engaging and dismissal of servants.

To put an advertisement in the local paper belonging to the district in which you live, stating the hours at which you wish to see applicants, and exactly what type of servant you require, is the most satisfactory way of proceeding. You then have the personal interview in privacy, and can judge from the girl's appearance if she is likely to suit, and she on her side sees the house and you, and can form her own conclusions.

When answering advertisements, beware of those which give the name as "Annie" or other Christian name only, and some humble address to which to write. In return you will almost invariably receive a reply from some registry office, which has put this out as a "tout." Much better to go direct to a respectable registry, put down your name with your requirements, the booking fee, and wait for someone suitable to be sent.

When a servant applies in response to advertisement or is sent from an office, do not listen to the demand for a fare to be paid, until you have concluded the bargain and she enters on her duties. Many people wisely reserve paying the fare until they pay the first month's wages. Unscrupulous persons will go from one house to another, answering applications, and perhaps agree to take the situation, then remark that they have come all the way from such a distant place on purpose, and "will the lady kindly pay the fare?" She does so, and sees no more of the maid. The servant who comes up to town from the country does so to please herself, and the one who comes from another district does the same; therefore there is no obligation to pay the fare, except in cases where you have specially written to a particular person and been responsible for their change of place, and it has been made solely on your account. Then an arrangement should be made about the fare.

When interviewing a servant, have in your mind the list of questions you wish to ask, or have them written down, if need be. You have a right to ask about her health, if she can rise without calling, and is punctual and to be depended upon, where she has been living, how long in previous places, the cause of leaving last situation, the number of outings expected —stating what you are prepared to allow—and the amount of the wages. You should give her particulars about the duties she will be expected to perform, the number in family, your habits, what you wish in dress and conduct, and what amount of extra work there is likely to be through possible visitors or other additions to the family. Let her have opportunity of putting questions of her own, and answer these fairly, so that she also may know precisely what is expected of her.

As to the taking and giving of characters, an interview with the last employer is the best way of obtaining a reference, but if a personal interview cannot be had, write to this one, giving in concise form a list of the questions you ask, and state, but very briefly, what kind of a situation yours will be, and will the maid be likely to be suitable for it? Enclose a stamped and addressed envelope for reply. A little polite note, and a list of questions enclosed on a separate sheet of paper, is the readiest and simplest way of writing for a character.

Written characters which servants carry about with them should be taken with caution; they may or may not be genuine.

Where you are taking a girl who is leaving home for the first time, and that home is anywhere within reasonable distance, it is wise to go and see it and see her mother, and it is also fairer to allow the parents to see the kind of mistress the girl will serve. You will also gain a better idea of the amount of knowledge the girl may already possess, and not expect too great things from her.

A mistress is not bound to give a character, and when she does so to the one who applies for it in confidence, and the statement given therein is a truthful one, the prospective employer should treat it as a confidential communication.

To give a false character, even out of charity or kindness of heart, becomes a penal offence if it leads to loss or damage to the one who relies upon it. It is also unfair to the servant, though it may look kind at the time. A girl who leaves one situation, and whose character is applied for and given, if she finds it necessary to leave her fresh place within a very short time afterwards, is put to a great disadvantage if her former mistress refuses to give her another character, and where this can be done it is only fair to meet her request.

Only flagrant offences warrant instant dismissal without notice and without payment of a month's wages; theft that has been proved, drunkenness, wilful disobedience, and staying out all night, are among these lawful reasons, to which we may add the discovery of infectious disease. Where there is no satisfactory cause for instant dismissal, and departure is insisted upon, it is wiser to pay the month's wages and have done with all claims; or if it is the first month, and understood to be a trial month, the balance of payment that remains will be just.

A servant cannot terminate a month's engagement by offering to pay her mistress the balance of what remains instead of warning, and if she leaves without giving due notice she forfeits all payment from the time the last one was made. Thus, if she were paid on the fifteenth of the month, and elected to leave her situation on the thirtieth, she cannot claim any money for the fortnight that has elapsed. No deductions can be made from wages due on account of breakages, etc., except there is an understanding and due notice has been given to that effect. Nor can deductions be made for temporary illness; but if the servant is obliged to go home on account of illness, and the situation is kept open without other help being engaged in the meantime, it is usual to pay the girl something for her maintenance, though not her full wages. Where other help is engaged, and the situation is given back to her on her return, she cannot claim anything, but must depend on the generosity of her employer.

When a servant is sent home on account of the family being away, board wages or some equivalent should be paid for the time the situation is closed.

X

THE WISDOM OF THE WISE—WHERE ECONOMIES ARE MADE OR MISSED

Domestic expenditure represents an outflowing stream which has to be guided through many channels, and watched carefully, to see that it does not overflow in any single one. It is easy for the stream to be augmented in its outflow by a number of tiny, profitless tricklings, infinitesimally small, perhaps, if we take them singly, yet, in course of time, making together a very considerable drain. It is quite possible for such a drain to go on unnoticed for years in even well-regulated households; but if it is an unnecessary drain, or, to use another expression, a waste, it is as much the duty of the housewife to detect and check this as to shape the main outflow and keep that within bounds.

These tricklings will not occur in the same place, perhaps, in any two households, therefore we can but make suggestions as indications of possible economies and of occasions for the exercise of thrift. But it may be remarked, speaking generally, that these wastages are very rarely concerned with money, except it is by mistaken purchases; they are far more frequently concerned with things which have been bought with money and not wisely used. Not deliberate waste—oh, no! but merely "unavoidable" loss. But why unavoidable?

May we not say that one of the most frequent causes of waste comes from a disinclination to take the trouble that is needed in order to "use up" materials in time? It does not always seem to be worth while taking such trouble. To make soup, for example, from the water in which a certain piece of meat or fish was boiled, would have meant adding to it other ingredients, straining, thickening, seasoning, and flavouring it—in fact, taking much pains with it. Rather than do this it was poured away. Perhaps there were some scraps of dry meat and bones, which certainly might have made a little stock for gravy, but they were forgotten, and finally they also were thrown away. Some crusts—but a bread-pudding is rather a tiresome thing to make—they were put aside to await their opportunity of use, and they went mouldy, so of course there was nothing else to be done but to throw them after the bones. The loaf was not cut evenly, so a piece was hastily sliced off in order to make it presentable, and that piece—oh, the birds had it! There was an overplus of bread-and-butter cut, and it was not put away—no one likes stale bread-and-butter—let the charwoman have it to use as she likes. It was a pity that nice jar of dripping was spoiled because by mistake you poured some fat into it which had the flavour of onions, otherwise it would have been so useful for frying or for a cake. Yes, it certainly *was* a pity! And your frying-fat, how often do you have to renew that supply, think you? Every time? Rubbish! My French friend would be scandalized. She buys her beef suet and renders it down, and uses the fat for months together; but then, of course, she is careful to pour it off each time into a clean jar which contains a spoonful of boiling water at the bottom. Or else she uses oil, and clarifies that in the same way.

And how many times do we not find waste occurring because things have not been sufficiently well made? Pastry, for instance, is tough, and pieces of it are left on the plates; or it was not well baked through, or perhaps it was scorched. The suet pudding, which ought to have been as light as a feather, was hard and heavy; no one liked it and it was left. Many things get left. We hear about ways of using up the "left-overs," as Americans call them, but these refer to those pieces which are left on dishes; no one has yet been bold enough to tell us how to use up those which are left on plates. There is only one good way, and that is to prevent their being left.

Many a leakage occurs, especially in summertime, by things "going bad." It is an unfortunate way they have. But there are such things as preservatives—harmless ones—which will keep decay at a distance, and there is such a thing as heat, which will kill any germs most effectively. By putting a pinch of boric acid into milk, sprinkling it over meat, by washing the outside of meat with a weak solution of Condy's Fluid, by part-cooking a joint, you will effectually prevent that little trick of going bad. If you made a practice of emptying all scraps of milk and cream into one jar each day, and let them collect until you had enough to make a few scones or a plain cake, you would find that even if they were quite a curd, they would make you a delicious loaf, needing no butter, and only a pinch of carbonate of soda to make it light. So that, instead of having lost by a waste of milk, you have gained by adding a cake.

We know how much more profitable it is to lay in soap some time before using it, but there is often a waste of scraps of soap in the bathroom and on washstands. No one likes to find a cake of soap reduced to a tiny scrap; it is impossible to get a lather with that, so out it is thrown and a fresh cake substituted. What became of the scrap? Why not have a soap-tin —say the one in which you melt soap for the laundry—and have all these scraps put into that, then all melted down together? By doing so you add to the sum of your washing-soap— only a trifle; still, it is worth having. Ends of candles, too: these often find their way into the dustbin, but they are invaluable for making a moky fire burn up.

When you are accustomed to the comfort of lectric light, which only needs to be turned on y the switch, you wonder why it was the natches used to disappear so rapidly before. t is truly astonishing how quickly a box of natches is emptied. Of course, they are cheap nough and not worth making a worry about, ut the cheaper they are the faster they disppear; otherwise it would be impossible for match manufacturers to make a living, of course.

That very facility of turning on electric light so easily should also mean that it can be turned off just as readily. You save by littles, but in such expensive things as gas and electricity these littles are well worth saving.

With incandescent gas-lamps it is a distinct saving to have a by-pass, and turn the light down with this, for it preserves the mantle, and that infinitesimal light scarcely adds to the bill. In using a gas-stove be careful to turn the lights out directly they are done with, and in lighting be careful to see that the air does not get into the pipe, for unconsumed air gives out no heat, and the gas is escaping to poison the atmosphere. Remember, too, that gas which is allowed to flare up round the sides of a pan makes no extra heat, but destroys the pan. To have only the right amount of force on that is needful to do the work means that you are using only the needful amount of gas. Keep down the pressure and you keep down the amount of gas. Servants are often very tiresome on this point, as they imagine that by turning up a big flame they can hurry the boiling of anything; but this is waste, pure and simple.

One of the most attractive features of modern housecraft, when we have got the conception of it into our minds, is the thought of the saving it means in time and strength by having the best and most suitable tools for working with, and by casting out old and laborious methods of work which made drudgery. There was in many old-fashioned methods and ideas a persistent wastage of time and effort, which drained away the courage as well as the strength of both mistress and servant. Now we are learning, but all too slowly, that to spend unnecessary time over doing even the necessary things is to spend it profitlessly, therefore unscientifically.

When a man organizes a business, a warehouse, an office, or a shop, he sets himself first of all to avoid waste of unnecessary time and space. He does not allow time to be spent over doing a thing in one way if a machine or another method will compass the end more quickly. Nor does he set a man to whom he pays five pounds to do the work which a man who is paid one pound could do equally well. He wants five pounds' worth of work out of the one, and one pound's worth of work out of the other. If a mechanical tool can turn out the same work cheaper than the man's hand can do it, he will use the tool, and set the hand to doing something else.

A little more of this business-like spirit introduced into home affairs would make the wheels of the domestic chariot run more easily than they do ; for women are too fond of elaborating details, and spend time unnecessarily, sometimes under the impression that they are being more thorough, but quite mistakenly so. It would be well occasionally to ask whether it is not better to leave a few things undone rather than to try to crowd in so much, and then pay for the effort by being too tired and exhausted to take interest in other things.

"My dear, don't save out of your own skin," a wise old housekeeper once said to a young one. And she was right.

We pay too dearly for a spotless home if it has taken more than a fair day's labour to make it what it is. Remember that the making of the home means more than the mere keeping of the house, and that it is quite possible for happiness to dribble away or to be crowded out of it. Let us, before all things, get a just idea of values.

We do not want houses to be conducted on hard-and-fast lines, like offices or shops ; nevertheless, the application of a few business principles would help to solve many problems and perplexities did we but apply them. Having such principles for our foundation we can build, high as we will, the fine, beautiful superstructure which will be a delight and joy perpetual to the true woman's heart, to the man a place of refuge and healing, and to the child the world in which he gains his first principles of right, his inclination towards heaven, and that reverence for home which will be his safeguard throughout life.